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The Pacific Sentinel

January 2020 Volume V Issue IV

IMPEACHMENT

FAKE
NEWS!
SAD!

Plus:

Best of 2019 Staff Picks

Uyghur Genocide

Another Police Shooting

Chickens Are for Hugging

Vegan Virtuosity

and MORE!



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The Pacific Sentinel is a monthly student-run magazine at PSU. We seek to uplift student voices and advocate on behalf of the marginalized. We analyze culture, politics, and daily life to continually take the dialogue further.

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Lots of important topics, including impeachment



In this issue, our reporters, columnists, and commentators have written about a lot of ways that individuals and societies choose to act and react when presented with complicated situations. Baby Ketten Karaoke proved to be a successful karaoke idea that could be better served by finding a permanent home. Claire Golden writes an honest story about her beloved chicken Harriett and the dismay of not being able to expect people to be respectful of her grief after Harriett died. The Uygher Muslims in China are joining the horrifyingly long list of a people who are being systematically wiped out—while the world waits with bated breath to find out if China will agree to buy more soybeans from U.S. farmers. A writer asserts that you don't have to be grateful that you're able to scrape by; instead, we can actively work to build a better society instead of being passive and thankful for the little we have.

As we look in the rearview mirror, our staff chose some standout moments in music, film, art, and even the story of a watch as the things that define 2019 for them.

Donald Trump is now the third president in the history of the United States to be impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives. As we look ahead to those two articles of impeachment being considered during a trial in the U.S. Senate, we must acknowledge that we are living in times that will be talked about for generations. We heard from Portlanders who rallied to support impeachment and what brought them out despite the cold blustery weather. In order to look forward, we examine the first U.S. Presidential impeachment and to see what those lessons tell us about today.

This is a moment in which it can be unfortunately difficult to wade through fact and fiction. All of the public impeachment hearings were broadcasted and I would encourage you to slog through listening to them—bonus points if you care to watch that much footage. Even just listening to the testimonies presented will provide you a fuller, richer, more nuanced understanding of who experienced what and why impeachment is happening.

There are definitely ways Democrats could have created a more bipartisan approach to their hearings; however, if Republicans and Trump want to end this, they should bring out the witnesses Trump encouraged not to testify. Trump should testify. If you believe the president when he says he did nothing wrong, encourage Republicans and Trump to cooperate with the investigation to prove it; then you can laugh at the Democrats for being so incorrect. If the trial in the Senate isn't comprehensive, the questions and skepticism about the president will likely continue.

Remember where you are and what you're doing, in 50 years people will ask you about it. Regardless of where you fall on the political spectrum, this is a time to listen, reflect, and be very present.

It's 2020, a new year, a whole new decade, let's hope it's a good one.

Sincerely,

Jake Johnson

Executive Editor
The Pacific Sentinel

Illustration by Josh Gates

Study Determines How Measles Destroys the Immune System

Laws that allow non-medical vaccination exemptions cause measles outbreaks

by Jade Dowdy

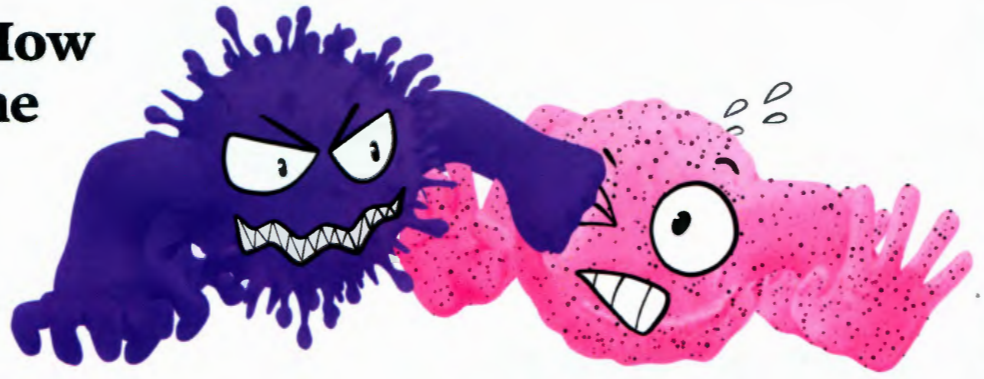


Illustration by Bailey Granquist

Despite overwhelming scientific consensus about the efficacy and safety of vaccines, anti-vaccination campaigns continue to spread misinformation and distrust. Vaccine hesitancy leads to disease outbreaks and deaths from preventable diseases. The vaccine for measles is so effective that scientists thought the infectious virus could be eradicated the way smallpox was with a vaccination campaign. But measles outbreaks still strike worldwide.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that, worldwide, for every 1 million people, there are about 36 cases of measles each year. Of the roughly 277,000 people who contract the virus each year, 134,200 people will die. For every 1,000 children that contract measles, one or two will die from it and as many as one out of every 20 will get pneumonia—the most common cause of death from measles in children. For every 1,000 children who get measles, one child will develop brain swelling—encephalitis—which can leave a child dead, deaf or with an intellectual disability.

The Washington Post reported that in the first 5 months of 2019 alone, the U.S. saw the most number of confirmed measles cases per year since 1992—971 cases from Jan. 1–June 30 in 2019, 2,126 in 1992. As of Dec. 5 there have been 1,276 total cases in 2019.

The late 1980s saw a rapid increase in the number of measles cases in the U.S. after decades of dramatic reduction in the number of people who contracted the virus. In response, increased efforts to vaccinate preschoolers resulted in continued decline in the virus's prevalence with a low in 2004 of just 37 cases.

in communities where parents use non-medical exemptions to avoid vaccinating their children.

Since California passed a law prohibiting non-medical exemptions, Oregon has the highest rate of non-medical exemption in kindergarteners in the country. Oregon is one of 17 states that allow children to forgo vaccination for religious, philosophical, or personal reasons, making the state one of the nation's most lenient with vaccination laws.

Last year a measles outbreak infected 77 people in the Pacific Northwest. In May, the Oregon House of Representatives passed House Bill 3063 to prevent parents from using philosophical or personal reasons to avoid vaccinating their children. But before HB 3063 could be voted on in the Senate, House Democrats traded the bill away in exchange for Senate Republicans to return from a week on the lam and pass a \$2 billion tax measure to fund schools.

Measles returned to the area this November after a passenger with the disease flew into Portland International Airport from Amsterdam. After four confirmed cases, it seems as though the scare for a larger outbreak has passed; but public health officials warned that unless people get vaccinated, it will happen again.

According to population data from 2015, mortality from other infections increases after a measles outbreak. Recent research reveals just how invasive measles infection is and why measles makes people far more susceptible to other infections. Studies conducted on unvaccinated Dutch children who contracted measles indicate that measles also makes the

"Vaccines: Calling the Shots," explains how vaccines work with memory B cells. A vaccine works by introducing a dead or weakened virus to the immune system, which responds by creating a specialized army of memory B cell clones that recognize and kill the infectious form of the virus. By building up a B cell repertoire, the body can "remember" how it killed the vaccine-form of virus by storing that information. The appropriate B cells get tapped and put into action when exposed to an infectious-form of a virus.

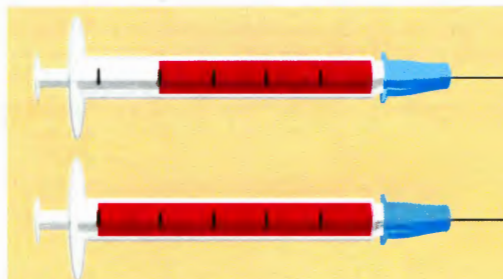
Scientists analyzed the blood of Dutch children in the Orthodox Protestant community, whose parents opted them out of vaccines for religious reasons. Velislava Petrova of the Wellcome Sanger Institute and the University of Cambridge led the study that for the first time, determined how the measles virus causes immunosuppression: it deletes parts of the immune system memory. Before they had contracted measles, the children's blood had antibodies for common pathogens to use against future infections. Children who contracted measles lost an average of 20% of their B cell repertoire. Some children lost more than 70% of their repertoire. The result is a significant loss in immunity against all kinds of pathogens. Petrova described the virus's impact as leaving immune cells "immature, similar to that of a fetus." This will make it harder for the body to fend off future pathogens entering the system.

Michael Mina, a Harvard virologist, had conducted a population study on the same Dutch community. A measles infection, Mina says, is "like taking somebody's immune system

and rewinding time, putting them at a more naive state." Mina suspects that the only way children infected with measles can recover the strength of their immune system must be to re-expose their systems through revaccination against all common pathogens in order to regain the lost antibodies.

Protecting children against measles through vaccination will protect them from the significant immunosuppression caused by a measles infection. Research found

that the measles vaccination does not have the same impact on the immune system. The vaccine did not cause any loss of antibodies in children. ●



Infographic by Bailey Granquist

Children who contracted measles lost an average of

20% of their immune system's memory B cells.

Children given the vaccine were protected from the virus and did not lose any memory B cells.

The underlying cause of large measles outbreaks is under-vaccination. In 2000, the only confirmed measles cases in the U.S. were imported from other countries, but there has been a resurgence of domestic cases since 2013

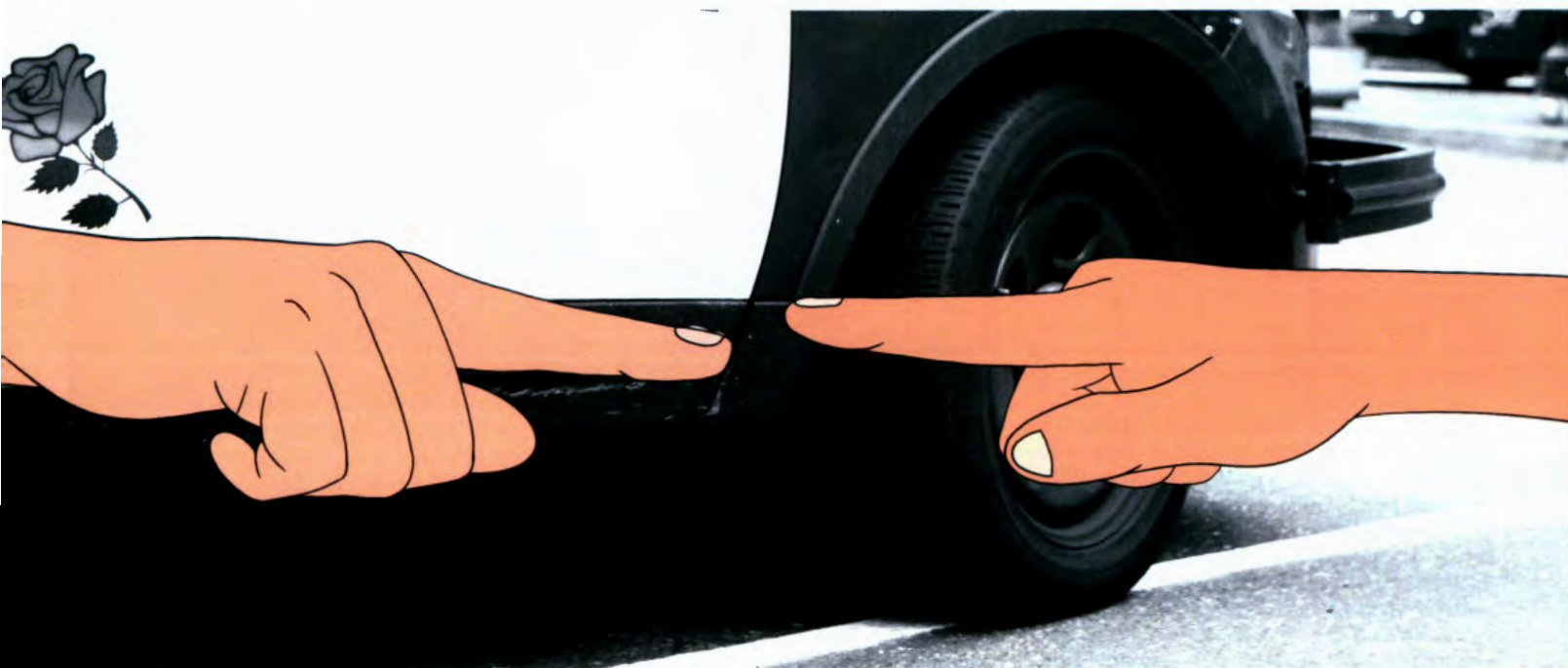
body "forget" immunity its developed to past infections and cause major immunosuppression. The "immune amnesia" can last for years. The measles virus attacks our memory cells.

A PBS NOVA TV documentary called

WHODUNNIT?!

Portland agencies accuse each other
after police killed Koben Henriksen

by Margo Craig



The Incident

On Sunday, Dec. 8, Portland Police Bureau (PPB) responded to calls of a man wandering in traffic and waving knives at cars passing by. Dispatch records indicate that once police arrived, they shot Koben Henriksen in less than 13 seconds. Henriksen died on scene.

The officers involved have been placed on paid administrative leave pending the results of the investigation. According to PPB, officer Daniel Leonard fired less-lethal foam-tipped ammunition while officer Justin Raphael fired fatal shots from a rifle. A week later, police reported they found two knives near Henriksen's body.

Response

Henriksen's father, Frederick Henriksen, told *The Oregonian/OregonLive* that his son suffered from bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, had been living on the streets since he ran away from a Multnomah County group home, and had been contemplating suicide for 6 months. At first, the elderly Henriksen said he needed more details before he could comment on the officer's response, but he did blame the public health and court systems for the circumstances leading up to his son's death: "If someone is as sick as Koben was—in a total psychotic break—not being able to force him on medications to

save his life—that's the main problem." In a follow up interview with *The Oregonian* he criticized the officers' response, too: "It is a failure of the mental health system—there's no question about that. But it looks to me like it's clearly excessive use of force."

PPB Chief of Police Danielle Outlaw abstained from commenting on the officers' use of force pending the investigation, but instead blamed the county for the death in a brief released by PPB on Dec. 12, detailing two previous encounters in the past four months that ended peacefully with Henriksen in the hospital. In mid-November, Henriksen reportedly threatened officers with knives. The officers convinced Henriksen to go to the hospital. In August, an officer responded to a school where Henriksen was camping. Henriksen reportedly told the officer to kill him, but the officer convinced him to go to the hospital. "This series of cases highlights the systemic failures of the mental health system, which continues to recycle individuals rather than resolve the underlying issues," Chief Outlaw said in a statement. "Law enforcement professionals are put in an impossible position and we need the public to help prioritize effective and humane mental health treatment and demand urgent and immediate action."

Mayor/Police Commissioner Ted Wheeler

agreed with Chief Outlaw. "By the time shots were fired, there'd already been multiple system failures in my opinion," Wheeler said. "I feel quite strongly that the mental health system failed Mr. Henriksen."

Both Outlaw and Wheeler are refusing to comment on the officers use of force until the investigation is completed.

Multnomah County is in charge of mental health and addiction services. On Dec. 13, spokeswoman Julie Sullivan-Springhetti released a statement in response to city officials: "Multnomah County will wait for the official review on the death of Koben Henriksen to bear out the facts. Ultimately, anyone experiencing a mental health crisis should not have to face a violent death at the hands of law enforcement. The County is actively working to provide other options locally for these situations because even if our mental health system were fully-funded, people are still going to experience crisis in public. We can, and we must, do better."

Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty released a statement saying she is "disappointed" that city officials are "myopically pointing fingers" at single issues. "This isn't a question of which system is solely responsible," arguing that many systems—including mental healthcare—need improvement. Hardesty did

Crawlin' Back for More

Alligators and flooding and a basement, oh my! When *Crawl* was released, it appeared to continue the legacy of such fine campy romps as *Sharknado* and *Zombeaver*, but, oh my, was that an understatement. A big aspect of horror, thriller, and slasher movies is that the viewer is able to conjure up the belief that in many of these highly-unlikely and terribly-unfortunate scenarios, the viewer would, in fact, be able to navigate the challenges to more successfully escape with less injuries. And, if feeling superior to the characters trapped in the story you're watching, or sighing extensively, or rolling your eyes so hard you think

by Jake Johnson
Illustration by Josh Gates

they might roll out of your head onto the floor sounds like a good time, *Crawl* is your film. This film might involve some of the worst decision-making of any movie I have ever seen.

The film is about a hurricane in Florida: water levels rise and alligators start running amok. The main character is a woman who rushes back home to make sure her father is safe. They get stuck in her father's basement and the film involves the two of them trying to escape the storm and the alligators that arise as a result. I don't think this movie is well-made, but the production quality is infinitely higher than *Sharknado*, which helps

set the movie to be able to at least exist in a semi-realistic environment. *Crawl* can't give you the 87 minutes of your life back that you spend watching it, but at least you'll know what not to do if you're ever caught in a hurricane trying to avoid enormous reptiles that want to chomp on your flesh.●



On Joker

by Van Vanderwall
Illustration by Josh Gates

It's rare that a movie receives the attention of the FBI and Department of Homeland Security on its opening weekend, but this was the case with Todd Haynes' *Joker*. This says something about the film, but much more about our culture. *Joker* both reflects and comments on our time.

The film takes the vantage point of Arthur Fleck, the fledgling Joker, by artfully moving between realism and hallucination. It is, to be sure, a dark film without a clear moral message, for which reviewers lambasted the movie. *Joker* roused the ire of critics for its allegedly racist overtones, its lionization of an anti-hero, the possibility that

it would traumatize survivors of gun violence, and for doing little more than rehashing *Taxi Driver* and *The King of Comedy* (both of which, coincidentally, also feature Robert De Niro in a prominent role).

The premiere of *The Dark Knight Rises* at a Colorado movie theater in 2012



was the setting for a widely publicized mass murder. Hardly a month goes by without a similar killing in a public space. Life in our era is often violent. Although a direct causal link remains unproven, the killings in Colorado suggest a correlation between cultural saturation with violent imagery and real violence. To what extent should filmmakers and artists in all media bear responsibility for their works? A brief piece in a college magazine cannot properly answer a question with which philosophers including Plato and Tolstoy have grappled, but we can, however, renew the inquiry in a time defined by the intrusion of electronic media and advertising into every facet of our lives.

This brings us to the commentators and their interpretations of the worldview depicted in the film. A nauseating maelstrom of lust for domination, sex, and brutality swirls around the eponymous character's interactions with the Black characters. *The New York Times* characterized this as unintentionally racist. Is it unintentional? The framing of brings the viewer into the Joker's mind the way first-person narrative does in literary fiction; we see the world as he sees it, not necessarily how it is. Is the film's absence of an

explicit moral message a failure? Have the moral compasses of us, the viewers and readers, lost all bearings to the extent that we need every piece of fiction to fall within the particular brand of social justice morality that currently prevails? Given the questions raised in the previous paragraph, what interpretive burden can be placed on viewers?

The way in which *Joker* most reflects our time is in its artistic features. It rehashes and appropriates elements of films like *Taxi Driver*, *The King of Comedy*, and *Death Wish* in a visually compelling, but unoriginal way. As in *Inherent Vice*, Joaquin Phoenix's acting prowess and command of movement buoy up a muddled amalgam of bits and bobs that fail to cohere as a singular work. There can be no better film for a time in which the attention span hardly lasts long enough to read a Facebook post or tweet, let alone watch a movie while recalling its predecessors and thus interpreting it in an historical context.

It is the controversy around *Joker*, the historical amnesia of its champions, detractors, and viewers alike; the muddled way it cribs from prior works without saying something coherent; and its madness that make *Joker* the definitive movie of 2019.●

Best of Products

My Omega Story

by M. Saqif Maqsood

Photo by M. Saqif Maqsood

I am an avid aficionado of products with a story. In a desperate search for a second hobby, I gravitated toward watch collecting. It was difficult to know where to start in buying my first self-earned watch. Of course, I had a few, some gifts, others inherited, but I never bonded with any watch until I started reading and researching on Omega. The Swiss luxury watchmaker, world-renowned for its accuracy, founded in 1848 by Louis Brandt... It had a lot of stories to tell and I fell in love with those stories. I fell in love with the watches. I fell in love with Omega.

I had to have an Omega, but knowing which one to select presented a challenge. While

researching the archives, I came across an Omega called the F300. In the vintage watch circles, the F300 watches are often referred to as "hummers" because, unlike most watches at the time, the F300 was an electric watch. This watch does not tick. Instead, the F300 is powered by a complicated system based on two tiny tuning forks inside the watch; the source of the low humming noise. Why is this my favourite watch? The second hand moves at 300 ticks; a frequency that is not visible to the human eye. My F300 belonged to a family in Japan, who bought it in 1974. It has a silver satin-finished dial, with raised baton indexes and a finely calibrated outer track for minutes and



seconds. When I wear it, I'm not just wearing a watch, I am wearing someone's memories, I am wearing something designed by Louis F. Breguet. A heart that has been beating since 1974, I am wearing my own Omega. ●

shortages and filling an estimated 110–115 officer vacancies. Turner argued that officers can't fulfill the public's desire for proactive community policing when limited staffing makes it hard to respond to emergency calls.

Portland Street Response

On Nov. 21, the day after Turner's Q&A, Portland City Council voted to pass the Portland Street Response proposal in an effort to change the way Portland responds to certain 911 calls and reduce the amount of contact police have with houseless individuals.

The Oregonian reported that in 2020, a new two-person team consisting of an emergency medical services worker and a crisis counselor will be available for dispatch to calls in Lents. The southeast Portland neighborhood saw 911 calls increase by about 20% in the last few years. Across the city, 911 calls increased by an average of 11%.

Leading up to the vote, Willamette Week reported that the unions representing police officers and firefighters tried to block the Nov. 21 vote and threatened legal action if city council decided to move forward.

Turner released a statement on the union's Facebook page, criticizing the project as an expensive, incomplete solution to homelessness that would siphon funds away from the Police Bureau. In his statement, Turner warns the public about the "limited scope of the Street Response project...intended to fit a very narrow niche," limited to calls regarding "unarmed homeless persons who are not at risk to themselves or others and who have not committed a crime."

Portland Street Response will be the third branch of Portland's first responders, joining

PPB and the Portland Fire Bureau. The degree to which the three wings of first responders collaborate will be up to their discretion. In this way, Portland's plan deviates from the Eugene-based program that was a source of inspiration for Portland Street Response, CAHOOTS.

Unlike Portland Street Response, which will be in the Fire and Rescue Bureau's jurisdiction, CAHOOTS is independent and separate from public safety agencies. Advocates say this is an advantage of its grassroots model and a pivotal difference of the Portland Street Response, which will, in theory, work in tandem with other first responders.

But according to Turner, there's no need for a third wing of first responders: "Part of the Street Response project is built on a false premise and perception that Portland Police Officers are ill-suited to address mental health and homelessness issues in a constructive and safe manner. Nothing could be further from the truth. PPB officers routinely handle all sorts of calls for service with mental health and/or homelessness components, ranging from simple calls where officers help connect people with resources to complex and dangerous calls where people are armed and posing a threat to themselves or others. PPB officers routinely resolve these calls for service safely and effectively."

Chief Outlaw has been a vocal advocate of the Portland Street Response Team proposal. But following the most recent fatal police shooting, Outlaw said the street responders would not have changed the outcome, echoing Turner's warning about their "limited scope." Per Outlaw, even if Portland Street Response were up and running, it "would not have

resolved this issue differently because that team would not have been dispatched due to the nature of the call involving an armed individual."

However, city officials say police and fire officials wouldn't only dispatch street responders to non-emergencies that don't involve weapons or threats of violence. Street responders could self-dispatch to calls they overhear on police radio channels, or they could be dispatched alongside of police officers or other first responders on calls. It is impossible to know if the outcome would have been different for Koben Henriksen had Portland Street Response been at the scene with officers. The Portland City Council unanimously supported the project. Portland Street Response will begin as a pilot program with one team operating in the 5-square-mile Lents neighborhood from 10a.m. to 6p.m. Monday through Friday. Commissioner Hardesty hopes to add a second team in the middle of 2020. Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly is confident the program will be successful enough that city council will want to figure out how to fund and expand the pilot to a 24/7 city-wide program. •

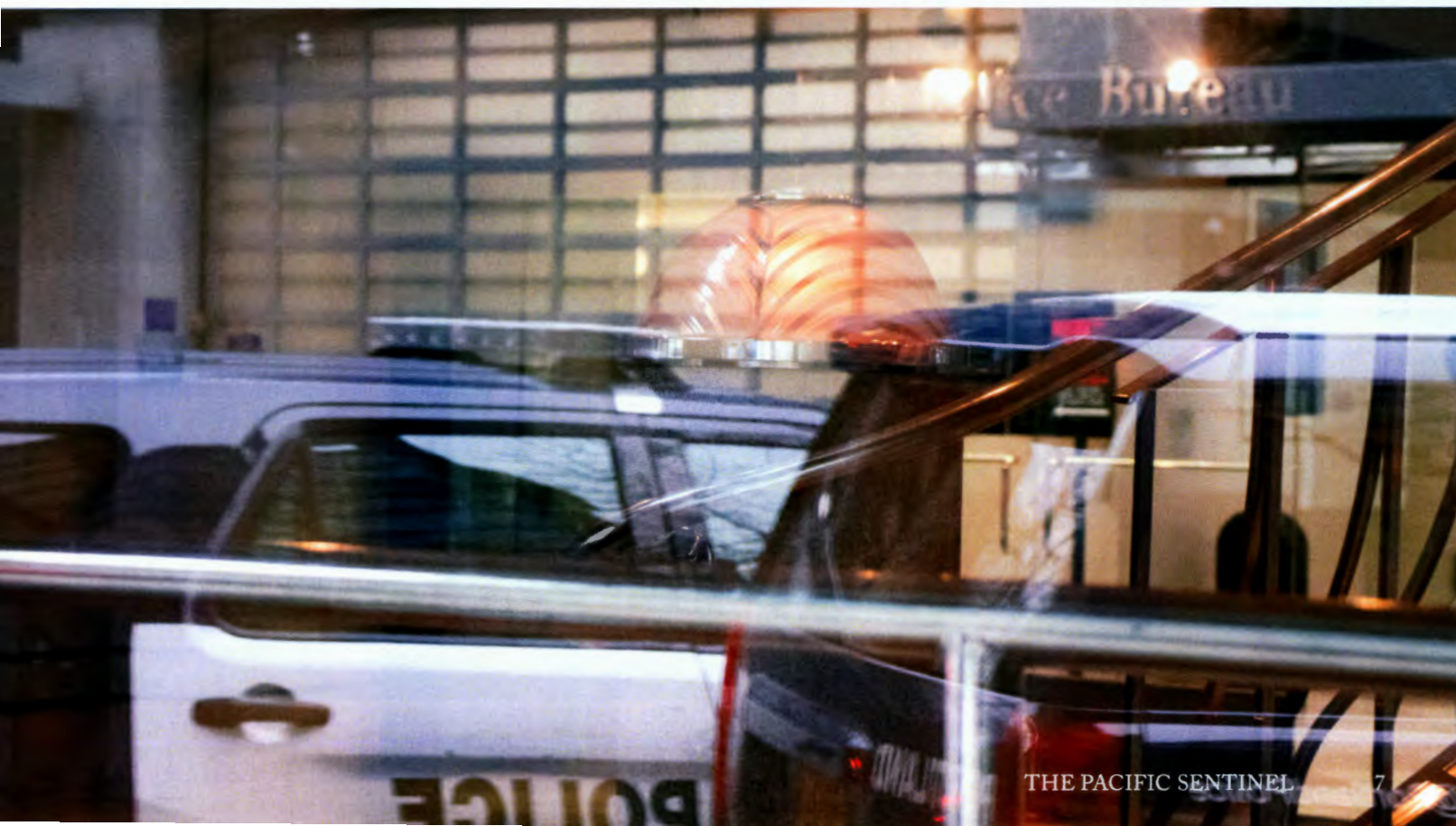
Additional reporting by Jake Johnson

Photographs taken relate to the topic of the article but are not intended as documentation of, or as being directly related to, the specifics of the Koben Henriksen incident.

Illustrations by Ana Benitez

Photos by Jake Johnson

Portland Police Bureau Central Precinct



Portlanders Join Nationwide Rallies to Impeach and Remove Trump

*"Impeachment Eve" sees 600+ rallies across the country because
"Nobody is Above the Law"*

by Jake Johnson
Photos by Jake Johnson

On December 17th, over 1,500 Portlanders braved the cold to gather at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in front of the Japanese American Historical Plaza Fountain to listen to speakers and hold protest signs that aim to hold the U.S. President accountable through impeachment. "Impeach and Remove" and "Nobody is Above the Law" were simultaneously being used as names for the event and chants taken up during the rally.

The event started at 5:30p.m. and it appears this was likely intended to show signs to drivers who passed by on their evening commutes home from work. Driving past, American flags and various signs indicating support and demands for the impeachment of Trump were held up by individuals, couples, groups of friends, and parents with their young children.

The event at the waterfront joined more than 600 rallies across the United States. They were held and promoted by grassroots organizations to show support for the following day's vote in the U.S. House of Representatives to impeach President Donald Trump.

Speeches indicated the organizers' desire for Trump to be impeached and removed from office. They cited the need for congress to hold the president accountable because they agree with House Democrats that the president abused the power of his office, obstructed the house investigation by refusing to turn over documents and allow witnesses to testify, and even though Trump is president, attendees signs and speakers speeches asserted that nobody is above the law. Toward the end of the speeches, audience members were asked to hold up candles or the lights on their phones to "shine a light on the abuses of this administration."

People came to the rally for many different reasons. One woman said she was a photographer for the Obama campaign in Iowa and said that it was "so nice to see people out and about and doing things, but boy what a change in times."

Denise Roach came to the rally with a blow-up doll that vaguely resembles a Trump-like

figure with the words "sexist" and "racist," among other things, written on it. Roach said she came out to the rally because she wants to live in a country that is fair and just for everyone, from every part of the country.

"Honestly, I wasn't really looking for a Trump sex doll," Roach said. "But it's all I could find! And I don't think it's made to scale, I think they've been a little overly generous. But, you know, who's to say?"

"I feel like our democracy is being attacked right now, by not only the Republican party, but also corrupt corporate interests..." Roach asserted. "If this was just purely ideological, I would still be out here. But with the climate crisis we don't have that long and [Roach rotates the doll to point to a drawn-on circle containing the word "earth" on the figure's butt] he's shitting on the earth."

"He's rolled back the EPA, and I have nephews, and I want there to be a world for them," Roach said. "I want there to be a democratic world. I want there to be a fair and just society. We need economic justice, social justice, environmental justice and some of these people need to go to jail. Exxon Mobil needs to go to jail. Monsanto needs to go to jail. We have to get dark money out of politics, otherwise we might as well live in an autocratic dystopian nightmare."

"I'm patriotic," Roach said. "I'm proud to be American. But I think if you love something, you always strive to make it better, and that's why I'm standing here today, because I think it can be much, much better."

Susan Newton said that it wasn't too cold, and was grateful that her daughter wanted to come with her. Newton's daughter said that she wanted to come and support her mom. Newton echoed Roach's love for her country as a motivation to be there.

"I love our country," Newton said. "And it's important that we get him [Trump] out of office. It's important that we educate everybody who is supporting him, because they are being conned. They're being duped and everybody around Trump in the congress is sucked into

his world because of fear, threats, or just greed...Because they want to stay in power, they're giving away our country. People think that we've got the best economy: great, that's because we borrowed it from our children, because we have the highest debt. I'm out here because it's really important to be a part of the democracy. I'm part of the democracy. One person, one vote."

"I took my other daughters to see *Fahrenheit 11/9*," Newton said. "and the fact that Germany used to be a democracy like us and it went toward Hitler, that's exactly what's happening right now. People don't get that, they don't see it. Well, we do—people who really want him out of office."

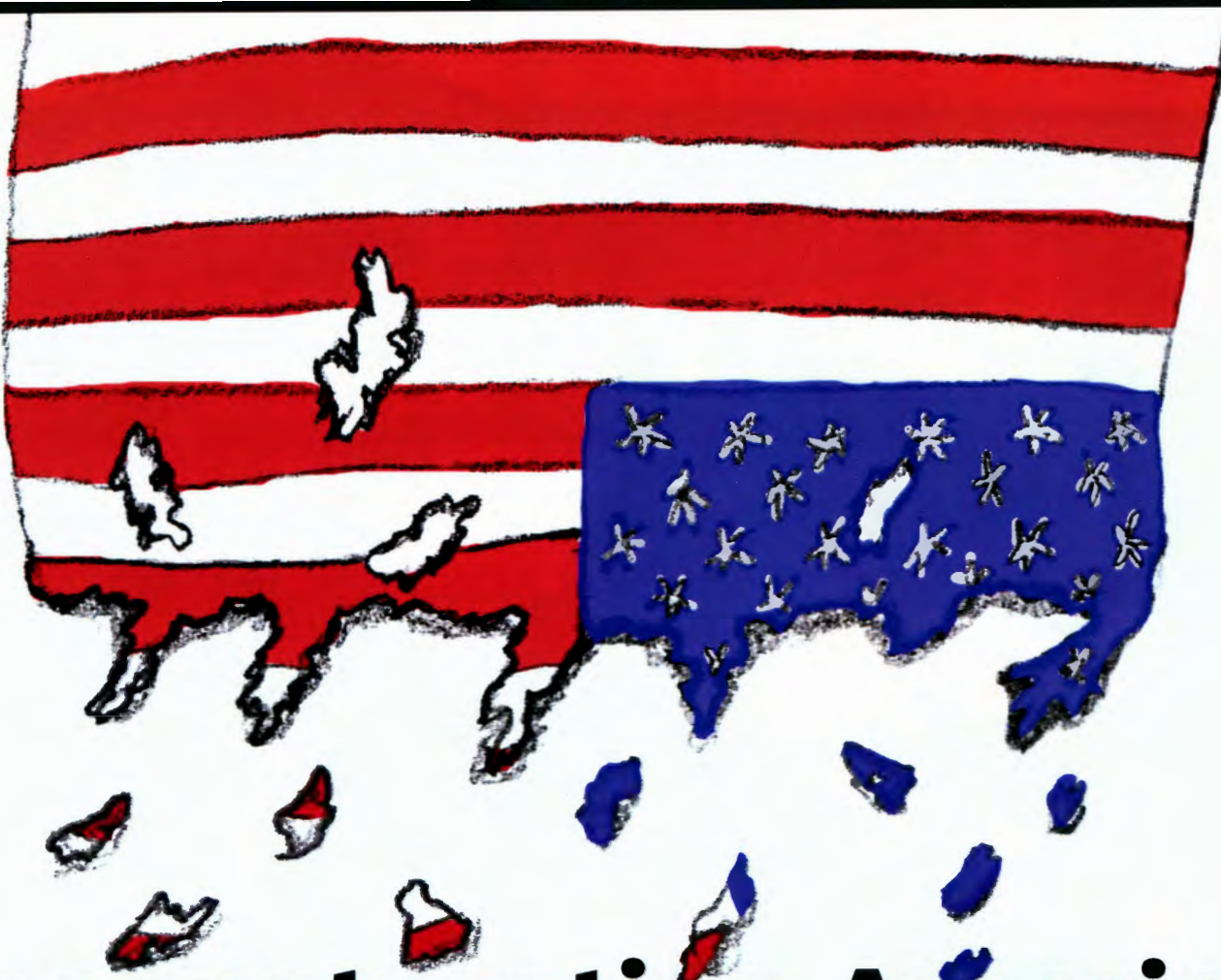
"I would even give him a pardon, like 'Go. Just leave. Just get the heck out,'" Newton said. "Any other Republican's fine, any Democrat, anybody, even Pence...but, [Trump's] gotta go."

Kate Sharaf was one of the event's organizers and works with Stand On Every Corner PDX and Indivisible Oregon. Despite some delays because of issues with the sound system, "I think it went really well," Sharaf said. "The crowd was so engaged. Folks were excited to be here. We had a really great turnout, people really stuck with us, and I think it was a really strong event."

The event was organized by a coalition of local organizations including Stand On Every Corner PDX, Indivisible Oregon, DemCast Oregon, and Nasty Women Get Shit Done PDX. Other organizations that cosponsored the event included the National Organization of Women's Oregon Chapter, Greater Portland NOW, One Small Thing PDX, Common Cause Oregon, and the Sierra Club's Oregon Chapter.

"The main thing I want people to take away is just that, Americans across the country are coming together to say Donald Trump committed impeachable offenses," Sharaf said. "He tried to pressure a foreign government to help him win an election. He tried to cover it up. And congress must act, they should impeach and remove him."●





Reconstructing America

The impeachment inquiry is only a symptom of deeper issues in the lives of Americans

by Wallace Milner
Illustrations by May Walker

In 1942, in the middle of the Second World War, a movie called *Tennessee Johnson* was released.

The film was a flop, attracting almost as many protesters as it did ticket receipts. It was quickly brushed under the rug, a rare disappointment in the otherwise sterling careers of stars Lionel Barrymore and Van Heflin.

I present this piece of information not just because it is an interesting piece of Hollywood trivia, but because this biopic has far more to say about the risks and rewards of impeachment than any present cable news coverage.

The movie tells the story of President Andrew Johnson: His early career, his rise as a senator, and his split with the government of his home state over the issue of succession. It then follows Johnson as he runs for Vice President with Abraham Lincoln—and ascends to the highest office when the Great Emancipator is killed. The movie ends with the protagonist, Johnson, fighting for his political life against a politically motivated impeachment, led by the sly and conniving Thaddeus Stevens. He is only saved by presenting a rousing speech, swaying the congress and saving the executive branch from the overreach of the radical congress.

The movie is a lie, a collection of misleading anecdotes and outright fabrications. As a story, it isn't a unique, or even particularly inventive, lie. It's just one small part of the sweeping ideological

and political project known as the Lost Cause Narrative. This narrative has been preserved and advanced by such political media as the novel *Gone With the Wind*, and by President Woodrow Wilson, who, in an essay published before his election, compared freed slaves to children.

How exactly did we get from fact to fiction? The deliberate process of manipulation and propaganda, combined with the natural drive of the powerful to defend their interests has created a false history. Understanding the bloody and tragic reality of the American past will be key, if we hope to avoid the mistakes we once made.

By 1868, the American south was vanquished. Utterly at the mercy of the north, the Confederacy had been humiliated on the battlefield and obliterated as a political force. The industrial might of the Union, unleashed by Republican governance, had overawed the decayed southern political structures. The brutal, total war waged by Generals William Tecumseh Sherman and Ulysses Grant had utterly broken the southern material base.

But the south was defeated in more than just military terms. The northern victory in the Civil War was a psychological and political one, akin to a revolution. It was not just the Confederate government that had lost, but a hundred years of southern agrarian ideology, white supremacist culture, and economic and social thought. The

entire myth of white America was torn apart by the war.

For a century, a viciously reactionary southern planter class had dominated American politics, combining a unique brand of agrarianism, Protestant theology, and expansionist ideology to create what was, up until that point, the American identity. Defeated in the battlefield, out of power in government, and tarnished in the eyes of the American people, one might be forgiven for assuming 1868 marked the end of the American racial caste system. Instead, it marked the rebirth of an ideology that, 150 years later, still holds sway over the American government.

The real story of Andrew Johnson is quite different from the MGM movie version. An ardent bigot and southern apologist, Johnson was opposed to secession on the narrowest of terms. He was the most prominent Democrat to oppose the war, a position which earned him the vice presidential slot on Abraham Lincoln's "National Union" ticket, a party created specifically to join War Democrats and Republicans in order to advance Lincoln's electoral prospects.

But though he may have been a useful ally, Johnson was never intended to be Lincoln's successor. A former slave owner himself, after ascending to the presidency, Johnson quickly worked to bring former Confederate states back



into the union. He was opposed in this by the Radical Republicans, a political grouping which demanded far harsher treatment for the defeated south, with the goal of not merely ending slavery but beginning to move towards racial equality.

While Johnson controlled the presidency, his power was limited. The Republicans had large majorities in the House of Representatives and Senate, and attempted to lead a more radical reconstruction. Tension grew as Johnson blocked this version of reconstruction and, when the president removed Secretary of War Edwin Stanton in violation of the Tenure of Office Act, the House began impeachment proceedings.

Far from being the the conniving proto-authoritarians they were portrayed as in the movie, the Radical Republicans were a diverse and complex group, with competing goals and visions for the country. What united them, though, was an uncompromising dedication to seeing that the hard-won freedom of Black southerners would not be undone.

Most prominent among the Radical Republicans was the uncompromising Thaddeus Stevens. A representative from Pennsylvania, Stevens knew that removing Johnson was just one small step in advancing civil rights. His most famous proposal was to divide the land of slave owners into sections and give it to freedmen—what would become the famous “40 acres and a mule” promise.

What Stevens and the rest of the Radical Republicans believed was that a nation built on a historic injustice required more than just liberation to achieve equality. Freedom on paper, Stevens correctly surmised, would not actually be freedom at all, so long as the institutions of white supremacy—the southern planter class—were preserved.

I find myself thinking of the impeachment of Andrew Johnson when I read news about our current impeachment process. Donald Trump is just the fourth president to undergo impeachment proceedings, and his career bears more than a few similarities to the controversial and brash bigot, Johnson. Beyond the particulars of impeachment proceedings, I think of the lessons learned from that impeachment. Andrew

Johnson was acquitted by the narrowest of margins, surviving by a single vote, but from that narrowest of margins grew a political movement. The conservative institutions of the south—spared the full brunt of reconstruction until the election of Ulysses Grant—began forming vigilante organizations that would one day become the KKK. Dealt a political blow, the Radical Republicans would never fully institute their vision of redistributive reconstruction. In 1877, Rutherford Hayes would strike a bargain that continued Republican governance, but withdrew federal troops from the south.

And, slowly, the white south would re-emerge as a political force. Limiting Black votes through the infamous Grandfather Clause, a complicated piece of bureaucratic trickery that blocked the right to vote through poll taxes and near-impossible literacy tests, but exempted from these barriers those who could vote before the war, and their descendants. In other words, unless your grandfather was a voting-eligible white man, you were barred from the democracy. By reinstituting white supremacy over the electoral system, the very system of inequality that had once broken the union was able to again rise. The divisions within the working class over the importance of advancing civil rights would prove to be a useful tool for the emergent millionaire class to hamstring workers' movements, destroy momentum from populists and progressives, and limit the potential of the New Deal coalition.

The lesson of the Civil War and Andrew Johnson's impeachment is painfully obvious. The problem of America rests far outside the bounds of an individual president.

The population of our country is locked in a constant battle between the wealthy aristocrats who run it like a business and the vast majority of us, who are in one way or another kept from political power. The Donald Trumps who are handed privilege by fortune of family are not so far removed from the Andrew Johnsons, elevated by bigotry. They are able to succeed, and able to hold power, because they represent the interests of a small but influential coalition of nationalists, industrialists, and bigots.

I reflect, too, on the fact that, once defeated, the south began a long process of propaganda, an effort to tell a story of America that was never true. This Lost Cause Narrative holds sway even today, when millions of Americans feel affinity with the rebels who betrayed our country. They celebrate the legacies and defend the monuments of traitors and murderers who tried to upend all that is worthwhile about America.

It is no coincidence that Thaddeus Stevens is either forgotten or reviled by much of the country. No coincidence either that General Grant is remembered as a corrupt drunkard. It is no coincidence that until the 1950s, the Radical Republicans were considered traitorous villains by former members of the Confederacy.

All these consequences are results of the politics of compromises. The moderate Republicans, who saved Johnson in the hopes that a kinder reconstruction would mend the wounds of the nation, instead ensured the legacy of the war would reverberate for well over a century.

If the Democratic Party of today makes the mistake of the Republican Party of the past, the consequences may be equally devastating. Unlike the Republicans of the 1860s, Democrats do not have the numbers to impeach Donald Trump. What they must have instead is the courage to advance policies that radically reorganize power in American society.

Just as Thaddeus Stevens hoped to turn the land of the aristocracy into the economic base of the Freedman's liberation, the left must have the courage to take back control of this political system from the financial elites by putting power in the hands of workers. A wealthy few have used America's broken political institutions to gain control of the entire country. The flaws built into our system from its foundation are being utilized to disenfranchise and exploit the vast majority of people.

Undoing the damage of President Trump will not be accomplished through impeachment or elections alone. The very system that put him in power must be destroyed.

That means considering radical political steps. Actions to enfranchise and empower groups that have never been given a fair shot in this country: workers, racial and sexual minorities, women, the poor. Ensuring their right to vote, to organize in mass mobilizations, to act as a united political front is the only way to build a better world. It means building a coalition that has never been fully formed in America, a movement of the oppressed.

This process will not be easy. Like the Reconstruction before it, building a new America will require offending the old one, but this project is a moral and political obligation.

The vestiges of aristocracy from the Civil War still exist today. When millions toil for menial wages, when millions more suffer at the hands of racist policing, and when a broken electoral system hands all the power to a wealthy white conservative minority, we are not so far removed from the days of Andrew Johnson as we wish.

To finish the work of Thaddeus Stevens and Abraham Lincoln, to truly make America the diverse and equal democracy we wish it to be, we must learn from the failure of the Radical Republicans. To build a new nation, we must have the courage to reconstruct the old. •





The Uyghurs: A Fading Chapter

The world watches and does nothing.

by M. Saqif Maqsood
Illustrations by Elizabeth Hung

The world isn't paying proper attention to the Uyghurs.

As China rewrites history with the ink of genocide, where is the sympathy for the Uyghur Muslims? It is sad that the Uyghurs remain news on television and in the paper while no concrete steps are being taken to help them. It is also sad that it takes a teenager on TikTok to remind people that the Uyghurs are being erased from existence.

Who are the Uyghurs? The Uyghurs, or Uighurs, are Turkic-speaking Muslims from Central Asia, the largest population of whom live in the Xinjiang region of northwest China. The Muslim Uyghurs were the dominant ethnic group in Xinjiang when it was brought under the control of Beijing in the 19th century. The Mandarin name of Xinjiang translates to "New Frontier," a name bestowed upon the region when occupation began. Like Tibet, it remains strictly governed by China.



The relationship between the Uyghurs and Beijing is complicated. The Uyghurs have very deep roots in Xinjiang. Their history with this land can be traced back to the ancient Sogdian traders, as observed by Marco Polo. Ishaan Tharoor, a reporter for *Time* writes, "A walk through the bazaars of old Uighur centers such as Kashgar, Khotan or Yarkhand reveals the physical legacy of a people rooted along the first transcontinental trade route: an astonishing array of hazel and even blue eyes, with blonde or brown or black hair—typically tucked beneath headscarves or the customary Uighur felt cap." In 1933, during the civil wars of China, the Uyghur leaders declared an independent Republic of East Turkestan, a short-lived attempt to break away from Chinese control. Xinjiang is an oil rich territory, making the occupation one rooted in economic gain.

The government of China has implemented

policies that are designed to drastically reduce the Uyghur people's religious, commercial, and cultural activities. This is not something China has recently started doing. Right now, what should be understood to be modern day concentration camps are advertised as "political re-education" centers built for "vocational training."

The Uyghurs are systematically oppressed by their own government. They are a living example that speaking out against China in the 21st century can be very dangerous. They live in a police state, where the government monitors their daily lives with advanced computer surveillance systems. A UN human rights committee had received reports from credible sources saying that the Uyghur region is being turned into a large prison camp. These people are subject to unnecessary surveillance, from facial recognition cameras to QR code readers on their houses, even extending to monitoring any social media

contact the Uyghurs make. It is almost impossible to find out what exactly happens in Xinjiang since media of any sort is partially banned from the region. Ablet Tursun Tohti, an Uyghur prisoner who was released from detention in 2015, told the BBC that all prisoners would be woken up at dawn, forced to learn the laws of China and sing a song that was titled "Without the Communist Party, there can be no new China." BBC interviews with other prisoners contained harrowing details of detainees not being allowed to sleep, being hung up, and beaten with thick batons of wood and rubber. Prisoners would be whipped, their skin

pierced with needles, and their nails pulled out with pliers. Prisoners could hear the screams of others being subjected to torture.

Since news of the camps has spread, the Uyghurs have earned their fair share of headlines in the media. The coverage was escalated recently by an American teenager. Feroza Aziz used the Chinese video app TikTok to raise awareness of what is happening to the Uyghurs in the form of a makeup tutorial. The video emphasizes the gravity of the situation, calling it "another Holocaust." After the video went viral, Aziz's account was blocked by TikTok. Censorship like this is dangerous. Aziz was desperate to help and turned to social media, one of the most popular ways to spread information. If facts about the camps are suppressed, the lives of Uyghur Muslims are placed in further danger. The Uyghurs currently have little to no rights. To be jailed, imprisoned, and forced



to adopt a culture and a life that is not your own feels like it could be fiction. The Uyghurs get so little coverage globally that it actually might be possible to address their situation as a myth or a conspiracy theory. Sadly, it is not. While China denies the existence of the concentration camps in Xinjiang, it prefers to phrase the situation as people receiving "vocational training." To further complement this fantastic story China is writing, a senior officer in Xinjiang also told the BBC that the region is facing the "three evil forces" of terrorism, extremism, and separatism.

China reinforces its treatment of the Uyghurs by saying that they are a threat, tied to separatist Islamist groups. While it is true that a fraction of the population may have joined the Islamic State militant group, the Chinese government keeps playing the terrorism card in an attempt to legitimize the horrible treatment of the Uyghurs. There are no excuses that can justify this sort of treatment. Countries that are accepting fleeing Uyghurs are doing important work, but that is not what the conclusion should be. China should be held accountable, not just in the media, but by organizations and political bodies that exist to protect human rights.

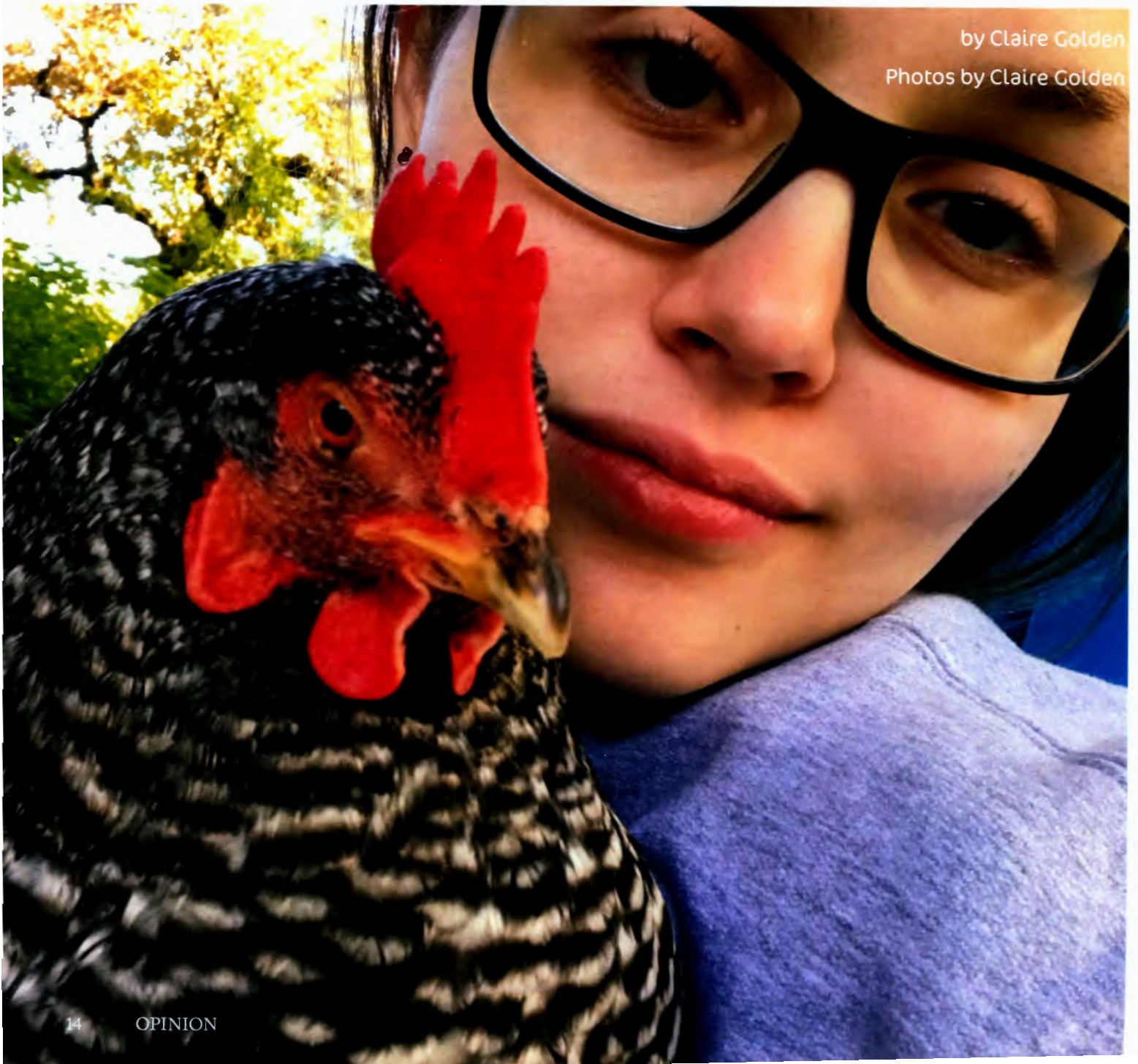
Hitler's Germany also had different names for its concentration camps. Some were called labor or hard-labor camps, others as transit and exchange camps. The world didn't realize the extent of the evils of these camps until millions of lives were lost. What will it take for us to understand what is happening to the Uyghurs? Is this negligence a product of selfish, oil-greedy interests? Would the world pay more attention if the Uyghurs were Christians? You do not have to be a Muslim to care about what is happening here. You do not need a qualification to understand the game that China is playing here. All you need to be is human. ●

Chickens Are for Hugging

*Vegetarians don't have to justify our
eating habits to you.*

by Claire Golden

Photos by Claire Golden





I trudge home from the bus stop, backpack digging into my shoulders, my brain exhausted after a forever-long day of classes. My yellow house comes into view and I brighten, quickening my pace to open the gate to the backyard. A high-pitched whine welcomes me. I dump my backpack onto a chair and run to greet my chicken, Harriet, who is just as happy to see me as I am to see her. She allows me to scoop her up and bury my face in her silky black-and-white feathers, nuzzling her beak into the crook of my arm. My heart rate slows; the stresses of the day melt away as I pet her. My backyard time with Harriet is the only place I feel truly calm.

I met the feathered love of my life when she was only two days old. From the moment I first held her at the Urban Farm Store, I felt a bond unlike anything I'd felt before. Harriet was nothing more than a cheeping ball of black fluff, content to curl up and fall asleep in the palm of my hand. Six years later, she was the size of a bowling ball but still liked to fall asleep in my lap. She was there for me during the hardest years of my life. I saved her from raccoons; she ate wasps for me. She chased me around the yard and ate berries from between my teeth. We read books together in the hammock. She sat on my foot while I wrote essays. Once, I crocheted her a sweater. Harriet was the reason I got into photography, because she loved when I took pictures of her. She was much more than a pet to me. She was my friend. The hardest thing I've ever had to do was say goodbye to my bird on the day she had to be put to sleep. There isn't a day that passes without me missing her.

I stopped eating meat when I was 14 years old, after watching a documentary that showed factory farm conditions. I remember crying over the chickens crammed into too-small cages and

thinking: *No food is worth this.* Shortly after, my family got our flock of chickens, and I knew I would never go back to eating meat.

There are many reasons why a person might go vegetarian: for their health, for the environment, for ethical reasons. My reason is simple: Because I really like animals. The health benefits are just a positive side effect. My ultimate goal is to be vegan, because I think that's the best way to look out for animals' well-being, but I'm not quite there yet.

The thing is, it can be hard to live in alignment with your morals. Hank Green of Vlogbrothers fame made a video called "Why Are Vegetarians Annoying? (An Exploration of a Cultural Rift)" in which he discusses why he's not a vegetarian, even though he thinks it's the right thing to do. He says: "Because it's easier, it's simpler, I like [eating meat], and I'm not perfect." I think this is an honest way of looking at it. If I had more willpower, I would be a vegan...but I just really like cheese. That's a terrible excuse, and I feel guilty about it, but I still devour second helpings of mac and cheese. Currently, our society views eating meat and animal products as the default, and it's hard to diverge from the norm. It's important to remember that it doesn't have to be all or nothing: you can minimize the amount of meat you consume without becoming a vegetarian completely. If everybody ate half as much meat, it would be like half of the world were vegetarian. There are various health benefits to being vegetarian, including lower risk of heart disease, obesity, and diabetes, and it's better for the environment too. It takes a lot of resources to raise the cow that will become your hamburger. Being vegetarian helps reduce CO2 emissions, saves water, and improves environmental sustainability. It's better for

both the animals involved and the planet we live on.

I get it. Giving up bacon is hard, even if you know exactly what happened to the pig. What isn't okay is giving vegans and vegetarians a hard time for their lifestyle choices. Just this term I told somebody I had a pet chicken. When I showed her a picture, she laughed and said, "Looks delicious." Hurt, I told her that it wasn't funny to me, to which she replied: "Relax, I'm just joking." A few weeks later, I told somebody else about Harriet, and they had the same response: "Sounds like dinner!" These comments are painful to me because I truly love my chicken. She isn't food—she's family. Would you make a joke about eating somebody's dog? People don't find that so funny. The worst instance of this was a few weeks after Harriet died. When I told this to somebody, they said without missing a beat, "Oh, did you eat her?" It made tears come to my eyes, because I had no response to that. It hurts that people only see chickens as food instead of living, feeling creatures. It hurts every time somebody laughs about eating my bird, and tells me to "learn to take a joke."

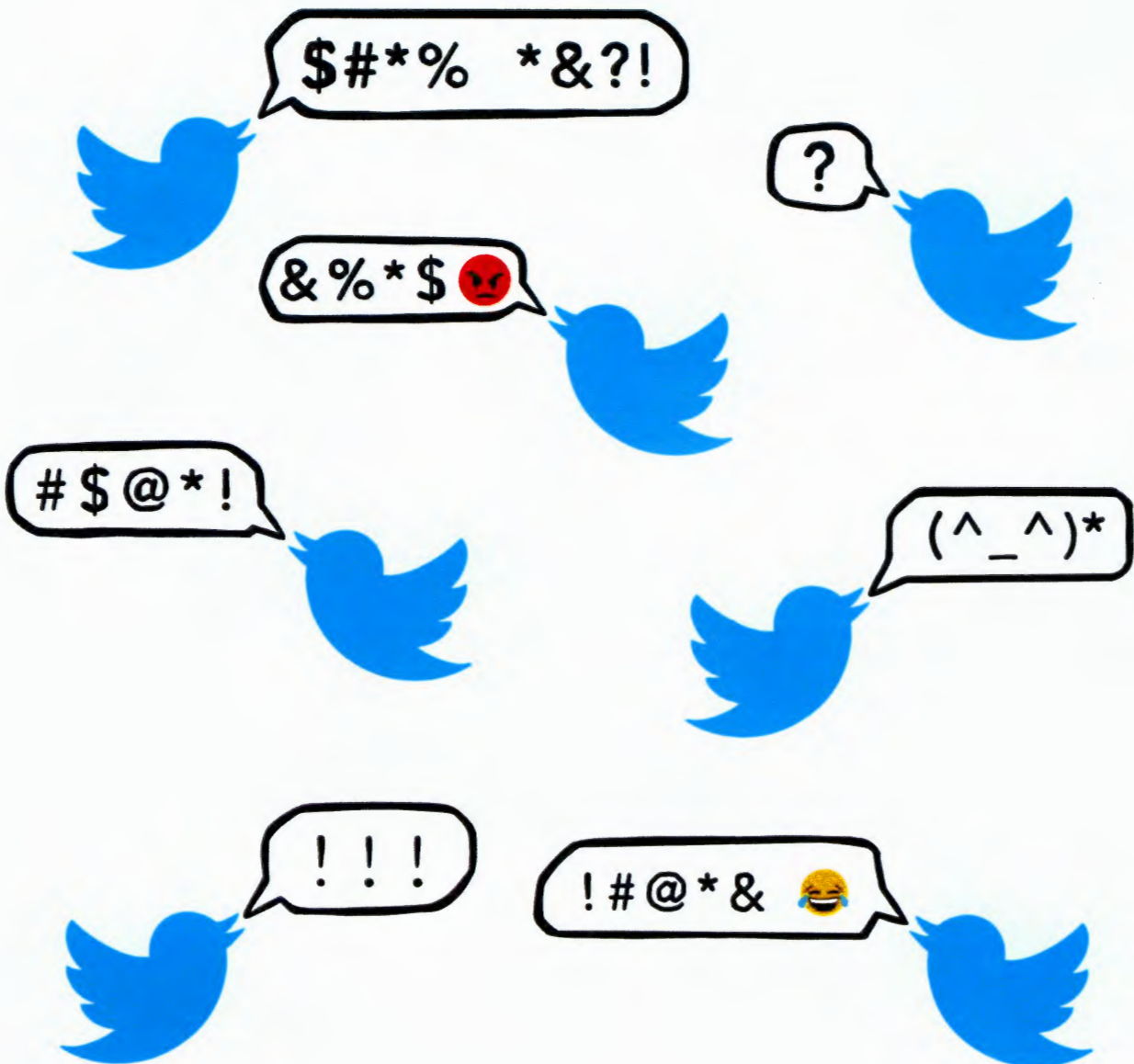
When you really love someone, they change you for the better. Harriet may have been "merely a chicken," but she was my friend. She made me a more compassionate and loving person. She's the reason I began advocating for animal rights. When I see a row of Costco rotisserie chicken, I don't see food: I see my friend. Your jokes about eating my bird will never be funny to me. Being a vegetarian is how I honor my friend, and while I don't expect everybody to stop eating meat, I do wish they would let me eat my bean burrito in peace. ●

The Myth of Vegan Virtuosity

Veganism is important, but the movement must make great moral strides to be considered truly great

by McKinzie Smith

Illustrations by Bailey Granquist



Veganism has great potential for positive change, but its image issue may be holding it back.

As veganism grows in popularity, more of us are considering altering our lifestyles. Between 2014 and 2017 alone, the number of U.S. citizens identifying as vegan grew 600%. From food, to fashion and beauty, veganism's rise is reshaping huge industries. However, there's a lot of misinformation online, as well as a good deal of rhetoric floating around this occasionally daunting community that I can't find myself agreeing with.

As with any issue, veganism has a Twitter problem. It's still quite common to find popular vegan accounts comparing animal products to slavery or using inflammatory language to spread misinformation, supporting the well-worn stereotype that vegans are combative with meat-consumers.

A few weeks ago, a popular video tweet showed a honeycomb being squeezed for honey. The video was stylized for aesthetic purposes, as honey isn't typically harvested via human hands. In actuality, a frame of honeycombs is placed inside a radial extractor, which doesn't destroy the combs and allows the bees to keep using it. Unfortunately, one quote-tweet of the video went viral.

"There's something that hits me very hard about how we steal bee's honey," wrote Twitter user Astrovegan. "It breaks my heart thinking about how hard they work to produce it and how disrespectful we are with that. Bees are awesome and very complex beings. And we are a disgraceful species."

Though it frames all beekeeping, ethical or not, in a negative light the tweet got 177,000 likes. For me, it highlighted the widespread ignorance of what beekeeping is and when animal products are potentially ethical to use.

In the case of beekeeping, the practice results in healthier bees and higher breeding rates. Beekeepers can help to keep bees safe, well-fed, and warm during seasons where that would otherwise be difficult for them. A phenomenon called "colony collapse disorder" can decimate bee populations if they are set free. Though it's still not totally clear what causes colony collapse disorder, research points toward varroa mites, a pest beekeepers actively test for, as well as uncontrollable environmental factors. Beekeeping is indispensable for the survival of bees. We can't survive without the pollinating power of bees. Supporting local beekeepers by buying their honey is actually one of the few ways you can help keep bee populations happily buzzing.

Similarly, buying from local egg farmers or wool manufacturers can be an ethical practice. All chickens lay eggs and sheep need to be shorn. Personally, I don't see an issue with using their products as long as they're treated well in return. Nor do I understand the argument that animals' "work" isn't ours to take. Aside from reasonable levels of milk or honey for the cows,

goats, and bees, the animals only have so much use for their products.

Vegan replacement products are often more damaging to the environment than the ethically sourced animal products. Agave nectar (a popular replacement for honey and source of food for bats) is harvested at such a rate as to be detrimental to the bat population in Mexico, and many leather replacements (specifically pleather and PVC) are short-lived, contain toxic chemicals, and are hard to dispose of. Of course, these products don't have to be a part of your vegan lifestyle, but when a product is propped up as a positive replacement, it's good to do some research on your own and see whether simply using the original animal product would've been, overall, less destructive.

Vegan rhetoric as it stands in popular online discourse can exacerbate the damage to the reputation of veganism. The comparison to slavery is quite common, as is the comparison of factory farms to concentration camps, with the latter comparison so pervasive it warrants its own Wikipedia page. I was personally turned off from the concept of veganism for a number of years upon encountering this rhetoric that is so deeply rooted in prejudice. What can happen to animals in factories is terrible, but animal cruelty is its own injustice that we can empathize with without comparisons to human genocide. Likewise, videos of animal cruelty and campaigns forcing meat-consumers to see animal cruelty are their own forms of insensitivity.

This division would be easy enough to ignore if it didn't obscure the many positive benefits veganism has to offer. Thankfully, there are vegan organizations clearing the fog like Try Vegan PDX or The Vegan Society that focus on education and positive change as opposed to condescension. Done right, veganism is one of the cleanest ways to eat. It massively reduces your impact on the environment, and you can stop feeling guilty when you look into a cow's big, innocent eyes. I'm not vegan yet, but I am trying to cut back a good deal on my animal product consumption. As a naturally small and anemic person, getting rid of meat entirely wouldn't be the healthiest option for me, but I'm eating way less of it than I used to and still feel healthy. I also try to stick with vegan dairy alternatives and buy all of my eggs locally. Instead of feeling negative pressure, it's best to do independent research and look at the big picture: Cutting back smartly will help you and the world around you. ●



STOP SAYING “BE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU HAVE.”

by William Mayhew
Illustration by Alison White

The phrase “be grateful for what you have” is hammered into our brains from childhood. Most likely, you may have internalized it too quickly to have ever truly analyzed it.

It's time for this phrase to die.

When people use it, the intentions are benignly positive. For many, it may conjure up memories of the morals taught in their favorite children's cartoons. Regardless of how the message behind the phrase is meant to be received, it is undeniable that it has become something more insidious today: a cudgel to use against anyone who dares to desire a better world.

To begin to understand the problems inherent in the phrase, simply look at who is internalizing it. In my experience, it's often so ingrained into the minds of the lower classes that they use it against themselves. Trying to look on the bright side is the main coping mechanism that our media sells to those who are suffering. Just type “be grateful for what you have” into your search engine to see how they're doing it. You'll be greeted with a barrage of articles and listicles that agree that you should spend time being grateful for everything from the fact that you're probably less poor than someone else to the existence of the sun.

The rich certainly haven't internalized the same message. Just look at billionaire Jeff Bezos. He doesn't seem to spend his time thinking about being grateful for his immense fortune. Instead, he thinks about growing it. For example, when Bezos purchased Whole Foods, he cut health benefits for over 1,000 employees. According to a tweet from former US Labor Secretary Robert Reich, Bezos was having a mansion with 25 bathrooms and two elevators constructed at the same time.

This example is only the tip of the iceberg, as anyone working themselves to death for less than a living wage in the Amazon Warehouses could tell you. Any time the working conditions are criticized, status quo enthusiasts will descend from the woodwork to argue that Bezos is actually immune to criticism because he is a job creator.

For example, the conservative online magazine *The Federalist* ran a defense of the rich in which writer Helen Ralceigh states that, “As

Americans, we should be proud to live in a country with the highest number of self-made billionaires in the world. From Jeff Bezos of Amazon, to Bill Gates of Microsoft, Ken Langone of Home Depot, and Larry Page of Google, many of today's American billionaires became ultra-rich by taking risks, founding corporations, employing hundreds of thousands of people, and providing goods and services that people around the world—including millions of average Americans—need or want.”

Dominant culture expects the poor to be grateful for everything the rich do, but the rich are never expected to even see their employees as anything more than disposable resources.

In an even wider context, “be grateful for what you have” has come to represent the same type of ideology that regressives constantly use to justify flaws in the American system. How many times have you heard some loudmouth counter a point about a flaw in our government with something like, “if you hate America, then try living in North Korea?” Life is so dystopian for the average American that we're sold the idea that we should be appreciative of every way in which it is less dystopian than the life of someone else. This mindset encourages nothing but stagnation and suffering.

Human rights aren't something to be grateful for. It's in the phrase: “Rights” should be a given. If your basic human needs aren't being met and you spend your days trying to figure out how to survive, then your government has failed you. Don't insult your own intelligence by pretending anything else.

So what message should be spread in place of “be grateful for what you have?”

Right now, it is essential that we build a culture of true self-awareness. Everyone, regardless of how wealthy they are, should be aware of what privileges they do and do not possess, and how they can use whatever power



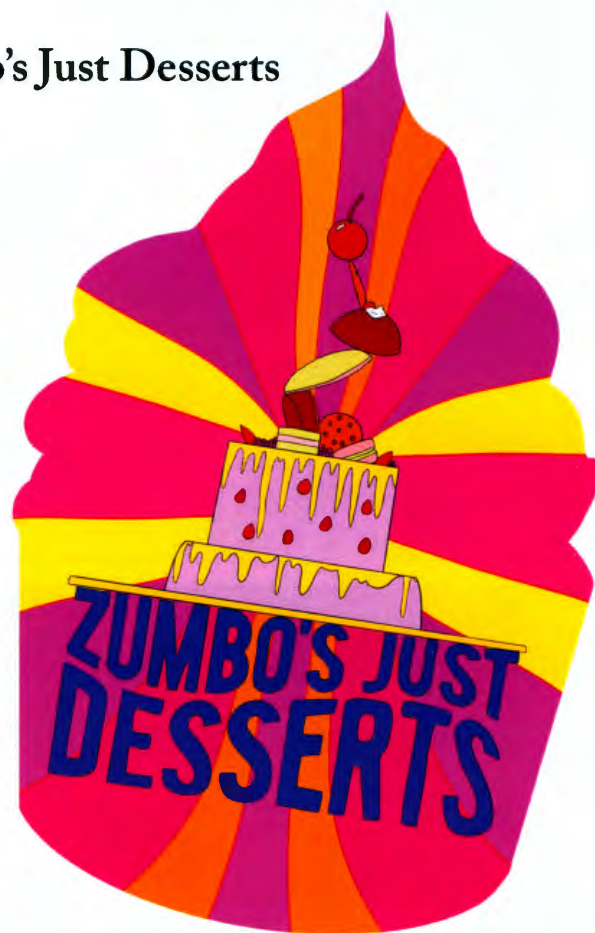
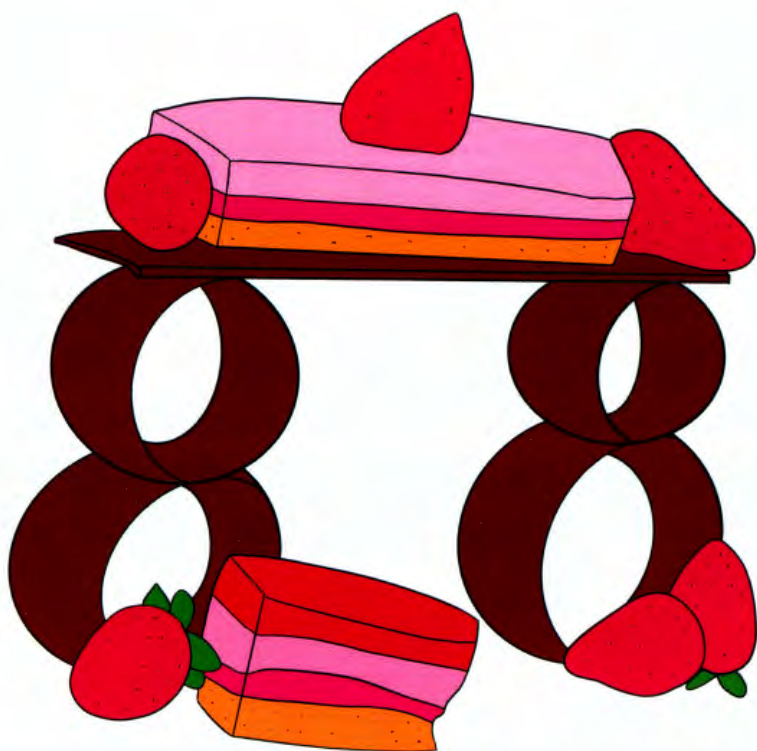
they possess to improve the world.

This doesn't mean that you can't find happiness despite the current conditions of our country. You can be glad if you've found a job with healthcare benefits, but this doesn't mean that access to medical insurance can't be universalized. You can be excited if you find an apartment that is cheaper than you'd expected, but you don't have to be grateful for your landlord.

Of course, there is one obvious problem with trying to proliferate this mindset: it doesn't benefit the few people who control the majority of the world's wealth; the self-absorbed upper management of our country who covet power over the masses. No matter what, the rich aren't going to understand our demands. It would be a complete failure on our part to demand anything less than a better world. •

Who Would Make a Baking Challenge Like That?! Zumbo Would.

Eagerly anticipating the second season of Zumbo's Just Desserts



by Jake Johnson
Illustrations by Ana Benitez

For the past several years the world has been an enormous poop fire. There are kids dying of the flu in cages at the border. There are societal atrocities that flirt dangerously with genocide all over the world. There are hateful bigots shouting at people who don't want hateful bigots in Portland on a fairly regular basis. There are blamazon CEOs that... Go to your happy place Jake, blamazon is the worst... Breathe... Breathe... And put on an episode of *The Great British Baking Show*.

I never used to be a fan of cooking shows—or competition shows in general. All of the exaggerated assholery and excessively-forced shit-talking from competitors or the hosts really isn't something that makes me hungry for a fancy treat. What makes *TGBBS* incredible is how unbelievably nice everyone on the show is to each other. It would be unbelievable except for the level of sincerity portrayed by the amateur bakers and support they all give

each other. Unlike most competition shows, on *TGBBS* everyone is sad to see everyone else go. Sure they're happy to be winning, but they actually seem to make friends on the show. It's beautiful.

Zumbo's Just Desserts is nothing like that. *TGBBS* was my gateway drug to the world of baking competition shows. *Sugar Rush* was okay, but that's how I found Zumbo. The lurking judge apparently had his own show.

Have you ever dreamed about taking acid in Willy Wonka's chocolate factory and then been thrust into a competition to make absurdly assembled treats that even the person who made the recipe thinks are insane?! No?! The show's second season is coming to Netflix on January 10th? Not sure exactly, but it's around then. I can't look it up right now or I might spoil it for myself. I almost spoiled myself just now, I got lucky and mostly missed it. I have a glimpse of something, even that is too much. I'm scarred,

and scared. Hashbrown no spoilers.

I'm looking forward to weird, slow motion shots of liquid chocolate, nitrogen gas, weird close-ups of Zumbo deviously laughing as each of the competitors struggle through each round while simultaneously worshipping and wondering what the hell is wrong with Zumbo. One of the other huge differences between *ZJD* and *TGBBS* is that all of the bakers on *ZJD* are whipping up incredibly beautiful looking sweets. All. The. Time. I love bread, but *ZJD* is all fancy, all patisserie plus. Some bakers will excel, and some will watch their dreams melt in front of them—just like the desserts they failed to get in the blast chiller for long enough. I may never taste half of what those lunatics make in season 2, but I can't wait to watch it.

Don't worry Paul, Prue, Noel, and Sandi, I will definitely watch the heck out of whatever you put out. *TGBBS* keeps me fulfilled—*ZJD* is just dessert.●

Pacific Sentinel's Best of 2019

As a monthly magazine that publishes about nine issues annually, *The Pacific Sentinel* can only cover a modicum of the art and entertainment that is created each year. As 2019 comes to a close and we contemplate our past twelve months of living, I asked our staff and regular contributors to briefly reflect on art of any medium that spoke to them in this latest trip around the sun.

- Shane Johnson, Arts & Culture Editor

Best of Art

April Bey's *Speak Truth to Power*

by Jake Johnson

Illustration by Josh Gates

Photo of the art by Jake Johnson

I look at a lot of art, but it's not every day that I encounter pieces that truly wow me. As a painter, I am particularly interested in painters and paintings. The main, super-big picture questions painters should be trying to ask and answer are: what is happening with painting, what has happened with painting, what makes a painting effective, what makes my paintings effective, and why should I insert myself into the centuries-old legacy and currently-bloated contemporary conversations painting as a medium implies. April Bey's painting, *Speak Truth to Power*, from the exhibition *Dear Lucy* at Upfor Gallery in downtown Portland metaphorically knocked me off my feet. It was bright, bold, incredibly powerful, and masterfully executed.

Bey's piece showed an attention to detail that chooses how to paint certain elements and why those elements require extensive rendering or effectively decides that mere suggestion is effective enough. The painting features a larger-than-life Nina Simone with the phrase "HOW TO SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER" over and over again, and at the end, "IS REFUSE TO

COWER" over and over again. While reading the piece the implication is that: Simone is an example of how to speak truth to power, and to speak truth to power is to refuse to cower. The painting used collage, both painted and collaged, bright fabrics stitched obviously, lots of glitter, and was hung in the gallery as an unstretched canvas attached to the wall with velcro. The painting comes in and out of focus, it stops and starts, it expands, and it hammers home. The painting does everything it needs to do and nothing more. I don't believe every painting needs to be politically active, but *Speak Truth to Power* chooses to actively engage politically and does so in a way that doesn't feel forced or patronizing. Bey's 9-foot by 6-foot painting is a generous piece of art that demands our generous attention. ●



Best of Music

Essentials is essential



by May Walker
Illustration by Josh Gates

My most grooved to album from 2019 was Erika de Casier's *Essentials*. The album features a mixture of sounds that bring to mind 90s/early 2000s nostalgia slow-jam feels combined with chill electronic textures and de Casier's relatably-soft lyrical abilities. *Essentials* captures intimate moments of youthful social intricacies in 2019 and explores those moments to the fullest. De Casier's lyrics melodically illustrate the discussions around technology's interaction and interwovenness in our modern-day dating culture. *Essentials* is playfully smart in cultivating a sound that feels brand new while also giving ode to classic R&B mastery. The highlights from this overall-perfect album for me are "Puppy Love," "Do My Thing," and "Intimate." This album is excellent for listening to before a night out, to put on in the background while studying, or to set a romantic mood for a cozy drive to the coast with a new lover. De Casier sets the mark high with the intensely-intimate, spellbinding creation that is *Essentials*. I know she'll be able to conjure similarly feverish connections with anyone else who gives this album a listen to. ●

100 Gecs: 1000 Gecs

by McKinzie Smith
Illustration by Josh Gates

The joint project of pop producers Dylan Brady and Laura Les, 100 Gecs finally released their first full-length album in May. A large leap from their 2017 self-titled EP, *1000 Gecs* is uncategorizable. Their *Adult Swim's FishCenter Live* performance floated around Twitter for a bit, confusing even the most plugged-in of music listeners. If you haven't heard 100 Gecs, I'll attempt to describe them to you: Imagine the music most popular in your scene kid days, like Breathe Carolina or 3OH!3, mash it up with the glossy hyperpop synths of today, and throw in a little extra stoner metal influence for good measure. Their lyrics dip into the absurd language of meme culture, often directly referencing our very online culture. "I might go and throw my phone into the lake," as declared by Les in "800db cloud," is as humorous as it is sincere, as empowering as it is telling about our relationship with our devices.

What I find most interesting about 100 Gecs

Better Oblivion Community Center

by Haley Riley
Illustration by Josh Gates

Better Oblivion Community Center came out of nowhere at the beginning of 2019. Their self-titled debut album dropped in January without any prior notice of the group's existence. BOCC is the duo of many emo dreams—mine included—consisting of singer-songwriters Phoebe Bridgers and Conor Oberst (of Bright Eyes fame). The two teamed up for an indie-folk-rock album featuring themes of sorrow, alienation, lost love, and survival. Their aesthetic combines 90s nostalgia with cultist imagery. Their voices blend together in a really lovely way that highlights Bridgers's haunting and tender voice with Oberst's tremble and angst.

This album is a treasure for all die-hard Oberst fans, and is an essential for fans of sad singer-songwriters. It's full of charming melodies, beautiful harmonies, and sad introspective lyrics. Both artists are gems on their own, but together they have created something very special. *Better Oblivion Community Center* is on the top of my list of favorite albums of 2019. ●



is their blending of already blended genres. Scene music, or "crunkcore," is already a mash-up of screamo and hip-hop, as is hyperpop a blend of conventional pop and experimental electronic music. As we advance into the future, genres are blending into genres are blending into even more genres. Entering the 2020s, I'm fascinated to see where bands like 100 Gecs fall into place. Will they continue to be underground or will they define pop music for the next decade? More likely, it will be somewhere in between, with 100 Gecs influencing new artists that water down the formula for wider audience interest. That may sound pessimistic, but it's actually incredibly exciting. We're on the brink of breaking down the concept of genre entirely; one must only look at the success of "Old Town Road" to understand what I mean. Once the boxes are gone, the possibilities become endless. I'm looking forward to it. ●

Richard Dawson: 2020

by Shane Johnson
Illustration by Josh Gates



If I'm forced to rank my favorite albums of 2019, this year's releases from (Sandy) Alex G and Purple Mountains probably top my list. But seeing as they've both been covered in-depth in past issues of the magazine, I wanted to write about the album that creatively excited me the most: Richard Dawson's *2020*. The album is a broad examination of the state of affairs in contemporary England filled with humor and emotion, with each song sung from the perspective of a different fictional narrator. The two stand-out tunes are also the album's singles: "Two Halves," which turns a youth soccer match sung from the perspective of a kid with a loud father on the sidelines into a surprisingly dramatic narrative; and "Jogging," a meditation on anxiety as sung by a laid-off secondary school counsellor who has taken up the titular exercise.

The details we know of Dawson's characters are sparse—they are nameless, genderless, average Brits—but the words he chooses are specific in a way that imbues them with personality and perspective. One song is about an overworked Amazon factory worker; another about dropping a child off at college; another recalling a UFO sighting in the narrator's youth but also their wife cheating on them in the present day. Dawson pairs these tales with long, unconventional song structure while bending and stretching his lyrics in unexpected ways to fit his melodies. And yet the songs remain so damn enjoyable. Who could ever take a lyric like "I know I must be paranoid / But every time I get the bus / I feel the many pairs of eyes / Weighing up my person surreptitiously" (from "Jogging") and turn it into one of the catchiest choruses of the year? Richard Dawson, apparently. ●



A Deeply Unrelatable Exploration of My Love for the Film *Rocketman*

The tale of a relationship with a film

by McKinzie Smith
Illustration by Josh Gates

Of all the films I had assumed would emerge as my favorite film of the year, the biopic about Elton John wasn't exactly on my list. Gaining instant comparisons to the boring, by-the-numbers slog that was *Bohemian Rhapsody*, I figured I'd skip *Rocketman* when it hit theaters. My journey with *Rocketman* wasn't born of intention; it was a rather unexpected chain of events that forced me to acknowledge not only my deep love of camp and a well-done musical number, but my own negative behavior.

Event #1: Cannes Film Festival. I was afforded the opportunity to intern there this May. I understand that bit makes this whole write-up a lot less relatable and probably makes me sound like an asshole, as does this whole sentence calling out the unrelatability and privilege inherent in going to Cannes. However! This is my story and that's what happened. Also of note: *Rocketman* premiered at Cannes this year. It received a four minute standing ovation.

Event #2: My boss took on too many interns. Instead of sitting on the balcony and drinking yet another plastic cup of complimentary orange juice with no real task, I was allowed to leave for a two and a half hour lunch break. Unfortunately, I had ulcers during this time and could really only drink water and eat plain crepes, so lunch wasn't going to take me two and a half hours.

Event #3: *Rocketman* is two hours long. It also happened to be playing in a theater that my badge would allow me to enter. For free! With vague interest and a sore stomach, I entered the third-ever screening of *Rocketman*.

Event #4: I liked *Rocketman*. I mean, the kid actor isn't that good and I'm not sure what Bryce Dallas Howard is trying to do in the role of John's mother, but hey, these musical numbers are undeniably thrilling! The "Saturday Night's Alright for Fighting" and "Bennie and the Jets"



sequences are electric, the scenes between Taron Egerton as John and Richard Madden as his lover John Reid are genuinely sexy, and it entertains me to the point that I can almost excuse Egerton for literally turning into a rocket during "Rocketman." There's multiple sequences of John talking to his boyhood self, unflinching in its sincerity. The whole film is over the top, in more of a musical way than a biopic way, reminding me more of *Across the Universe* or, at times, *Moulin Rouge!* than *Bohemian Rhapsody*. I come back to work and tell my boss I liked it, to which he agrees. He got to go to the premiere... Imagine the decadence.

Event #5: I came home and watched *Rocketman* again, this time with my boyfriend. This time around, I felt strange. "Bennie and the Jets" gave me goosebumps. Egerton struts across the stage in Elizabethan garb, at his wits end and about to hit rock bottom. The spiral of Elton John was beginning to echo mine, as I entered a summer of interpersonal turbulence and poor decision-making. I start telling everyone I know to go watch *Rocketman*.

Event #6: I saw *Rocketman* a third time with my best friend, Mikayla. This time around I was made more aware of the details of the friendship between Elton John and his songwriting

partner, Bernie Taupin. They bond over their love of uncool music, help one another through romantic struggles, and further each others' life opportunities. The chemistry between Egerton and Jamie Bell as Taupin feels genuine; they alternate effortlessly between laughter and tears, often in the same scene. In the coming months, Mikayla and I would rely on each other for a variety of reasons, always able to look past one another's faults and into the well-meaning idiot inside. John and Taupin's friendship is one built on that first spark of realizing they have the same passionate interests. Their eyes are wild with laughter the first time they meet, unable to stop themselves from breaking into song together. I am reminded of junior year, Mikayla and I dancing in our high school parking lot, unable to stop ourselves from breaking into song together.

Event #7: I saw *Rocketman* a fourth time. Alone. By this point, I am chasing the joy that *Rocketman* gives me. I eagerly await "Honky Cat" so I can bask in the harmonization between Egerton and Madden on the line, "It's like trying to drink whiskey from a bottle of wine." The film is pure sugar and fun, basking in its own spotlight. It may be surprising, then, that the ultimate message is one of personal accountability. John's wake-up call can only come from within himself, once he has acknowledged that his selfish behavior takes a toll on those around him. Seeing John come out of his own struggles on the other side a happier, more fulfilled man provided me with solace.

Event #8: I finally admit to myself that *Rocketman* is one of my favorite films. The final scene is a recreation of the music video for John's "I'm Still Standing." It was filmed in Cannes. Egerton wears a white suit and a gap-toothed grin, emerging victorious from a battle against himself. This is the version of Egerton-as-John I identify with now. Relationships with my boyfriend, friends, and family set to rights, I've fought myself and won. This campy, silly blockbuster has led me on a self-guided meditation into my own inner workings. It encouraged me to pursue a better me, a more fabulous me, in a time that I desperately needed that. *Rocketman* is a beautiful character study with great potential for good and if it doesn't win as many awards this year as *Bohemian Rhapsody* did last year, I'm rioting in my high-heeled boots. ●

Crawlin' Back for More

Alligators and flooding and a basement, oh my! When *Crawl* was released, it appeared to continue the legacy of such fine campy romps as *Sharknado* and *Zombeaver*, but, oh my, was that an understatement. A big aspect of horror, thriller, and slasher movies is that the viewer is able to conjure up the belief that in many of these highly-unlikely and terribly-unfortunate scenarios, the viewer would, in fact, be able to navigate the challenges to more successfully escape with less injuries. And, if feeling superior to the characters trapped in the story you're watching, or sighing extensively, or rolling your eyes so hard you think

by Jake Johnson
Illustration by Josh Gates

they might roll out of your head onto the floor sounds like a good time, *Crawl* is your film. This film might involve some of the worst decision-making of any movie I have ever seen.

The film is about a hurricane in Florida: water levels rise and alligators start running amok. The main character is a woman who rushes back home to make sure her father is safe. They get stuck in her father's basement and the film involves the two of them trying to escape the storm and the alligators that arise as a result. I don't think this movie is well-made, but the production quality is infinitely higher than *Sharknado*, which helps

set the movie to be able to at least exist in a semi-realistic environment. *Crawl* can't give you the 87 minutes of your life back that you spend watching it, but at least you'll know what not to do if you're ever caught in a hurricane trying to avoid enormous reptiles that want to chomp on your flesh.●



On Joker

by Van Vanderwall
Illustration by Josh Gates

It's rare that a movie receives the attention of the FBI and Department of Homeland Security on its opening weekend, but this was the case with Todd Haynes' *Joker*. This says something about the film, but much more about our culture. *Joker* both reflects and comments on our time.

The film takes the vantage point of Arthur Fleck, the fledgling Joker, by artfully moving between realism and hallucination. It is, to be sure, a dark film without a clear moral message, for which reviewers lambasted the movie. *Joker* roused the ire of critics for its allegedly racist overtones, its lionization of an anti-hero, the possibility that

it would traumatize survivors of gun violence, and for doing little more than rehashing *Taxi Driver* and *The King of Comedy* (both of which, coincidentally, also feature Robert De Niro in a prominent role).

The premiere of *The Dark Knight Rises* at a Colorado movie theater in 2012



was the setting for a widely publicized mass murder. Hardly a month goes by without a similar killing in a public space. Life in our era is often violent. Although a direct causal link remains unproven, the killings in Colorado suggest a correlation between cultural saturation with violent imagery and real violence. To what extent should filmmakers and artists in all media bear responsibility for their works? A brief piece in a college magazine cannot properly answer a question with which philosophers including Plato and Tolstoy have grappled, but we can, however, renew the inquiry in a time defined by the intrusion of electronic media and advertising into every facet of our lives.

This brings us to the commentators and their interpretations of the worldview depicted in the film. A nauseating maelstrom of lust for domination, sex, and brutality swirls around the eponymous character's interactions with the Black characters. *The New York Times* characterized this as unintentionally racist. Is it unintentional? The framing of brings the viewer into the Joker's mind the way first-person narrative does in literary fiction; we see the world as he sees it, not necessarily how it is. Is the film's absence of an

explicit moral message a failure? Have the moral compasses of us, the viewers and readers, lost all bearings to the extent that we need every piece of fiction to fall within the particular brand of social justice morality that currently prevails? Given the questions raised in the previous paragraph, what interpretive burden can be placed on viewers?

The way in which *Joker* most reflects our time is in its artistic features. It rehashes and appropriates elements of films like *Taxi Driver*, *The King of Comedy*, and *Death Wish* in a visually compelling, but unoriginal way. As in *Inherent Vice*, Joaquin Phoenix's acting prowess and command of movement buoy up a muddled amalgam of bits and bobs that fail to cohere as a singular work. There can be no better film for a time in which the attention span hardly lasts long enough to read a Facebook post or tweet, let alone watch a movie while recalling its predecessors and thus interpreting it in an historical context.

It is the controversy around *Joker*, the historical amnesia of its champions, detractors, and viewers alike; the muddled way it cribbs from prior works without saying something coherent; and its madness that make *Joker* the definitive movie of 2019.●

Best of Products

My Omega Story

by M. Saqif Maqsood

Photo by M. Saqif Maqsood

I am an avid aficionado of products with a story. In a desperate search for a second hobby, I gravitated toward watch collecting. It was difficult to know where to start in buying my first self-earned watch. Of course, I had a few, some gifts, others inherited, but I never bonded with any watch until I started reading and researching on Omega. The Swiss luxury watchmaker, world-renowned for its accuracy, founded in 1848 by Louis Brandt... It had a lot of stories to tell and I fell in love with those stories. I fell in love with the watches. I fell in love with Omega.

I had to have an Omega, but knowing which one to select presented a challenge. While

researching the archives, I came across an Omega called the F300. In the vintage watch circles, the F300 watches are often referred to as "hummers" because, unlike most watches at the time, the F300 was an electric watch. This watch does not tick. Instead, the F300 is powered by a complicated system based on two tiny tuning forks inside the watch; the source of the low humming noise. Why is this my favourite watch? The second hand moves at 300 ticks; a frequency that is not visible to the human eye. My F300 belonged to a family in Japan, who bought it in 1974. It has a silver satin-finished dial, with raised baton indexes and a finely calibrated outer track for minutes and



seconds. When I wear it, I'm not just wearing a watch, I am wearing someone's memories, I am wearing something designed by Louis F. Breguet. A heart that has been beating since 1974, I am wearing my own Omega. ●

Baby Ketten Finds Its Forever Home

Portland's eccentric karaoke night opens the doors to its perfectly distinct new location



by Shane Johnson
Photos by Shane Johnson

My new favorite karaoke place is located underneath a pizza restaurant. Step down the stairs beneath Rudy's Gourmet Pizza on SE Powell & 25th and enter the recently opened Baby Ketten Karaoke Klub, the first permanent location of the long-popular Baby Ketten Karaoke night that has rotated between venues in Portland for over a decade. The Cheerful Tortoise and Suki's both host fun and respectable karaoke nights near PSU run by friendly KJs, but Baby Ketten takes karaoke seriously in a way that doesn't strip any of the fun away.

My first time at Baby Ketten Karaoke began in more or less conventional karaoke fashion: a variety of primarily 20–30 somethings adorned the performing area taking turns with wireless mic in hand to sing some usual karaoke selections: a few nostalgic pop songs from more youthful days, a timeless classic or two, and the occasional metal song performed by someone determined to show off their lung capacity. But then someone sang "Retrograde" by James Blake—a slow-building electro-soul

ballad whose repeating lyrics were certainly not written with a karaoke setting in mind. But Baby Ketten has a fog machine, well-designed lighting, and an encouraging crowd, and "Retrograde" turned out to be a surprisingly engaging karaoke song.

One of the defining features of Baby Ketten has always been its song selection. Founder John Brophy takes great care to curate a unique and expansive set of songs. As a musician, he has gone so far as to record backing tracks himself when they were unavailable through traditional channels. Songs by Wilco, Beyoncé, The Mountain Goats, Linda Ronstadt, Vampire Weekend, The Talking Heads, Britney Spears, and LCD Soundsystem among many others were all sang over the course of the two nights I visited.

And there is no need to awkwardly attempt to shout into the KJ's ear to ask if they have a specific song. In neat piles alongside the KJ booth and scattered around the room lay what appear from a distance to be phone books. Upon closer inspection, the nearly inch-thick publications are Baby Ketten's entire song catalog printed neatly in alphabetical order by artist name: 209 pages in total. If flipping

through that to find a song is too quixotic a task for your taste, there is a Baby Ketten phone app available to search through the complete and ever-growing song library digitally.

The karaoke club's new space is unconventional but inviting. Framed landscape paintings hang along the wall above cozy booths, opposite a classic curved bar. Arcade games and well-decorated private karaoke rooms glow from the peripheries of the main room. In the middle of a busy weekend, it can be a bit crowded with standing room only due to space limitations. But even at 8pm on a Tuesday night, the club felt cozy and well-attended. Baby Ketten only allows one request at a time, so my personal tips for success would be to get there early in the evening and decide your songs ahead of time. All things considered, it's an operation that feels delightfully local and sincere, yet runs like a well-oiled machine designed to turn the biggest music fans into karaoke fans too.

Since it's a "a little crazy over in kettenland" right now, Brophy kindly answered some questions via email about the new club, his song selection, and more.

[The following interview has been lightly edited for clarity and brevity.]

Shane Johnson: How long had you wanted to find a physical location for Baby Ketten Karaoke? What made this space feel right?

John Brophy: I would say about 10 years or so. Completely setting up and tearing down all the A/V and lighting that it takes for a BKK show on any given night at random venues was quite the process. Now it's a matter of just turning the power on, *droool*. The space that we are in used to be a bar called BC's. We started the Portland edition (originally started in Albuquerque in 2005) of BKK at BC's 13 years ago so when I found out that it was for sale it seemed supes serendip.

SJ: What were your goals in designing the new space?

JB: Initially I was thinking dive bar meets state of the art karaoke but as time went by it became less and less divey. I realized most of the dive feel is wall clutter and I just can't. I guess the ultimate goal was to create the feeling that the space has always been there and not some new build. I used the original existing amaze bar from the 70s as inspiration and got to work. We were able to source most everything in the main space secondhand from former establishments. I think it def ended up with that cozy vintage feel I was going for.

SJ: Why the framed landscape paintings?

JB: I love the Bob Ross-esque styling and the

greens and blues that they brought to the space, and I'm a sucker for gold ornate frames. If you look closely at all of the paintings there are kettenz doing various outdoor activities in each one. It created a great opportunity to showcase some of our very talented ketten artists.

SJ: How have the first two months gone? What are your goals for the future?

JB: It's my first bar, so on the back end I am running around like mad but on the front end things are pretty great. The turnout, support, and positive feedback from all tha kettenz makes everything worth it. Near future goals are to open the private rooms and get some signage up so that people know that we have pinball, Big Buck, Pac-Man Battle Royale, and an amazing photobooth all hidden in the back room just waiting to be found by curious kettenz. We will be opening at 5p.m. soon and will add a happy hour 5-6 and various activitiez 6-8ish everyday like trivia, bingo, VJ's, etc. Further future goals would be: smoking patio and more dooper menu. [Editor's note: since the time of interview, private rooms are available to rent and the club now opens at 5p.m. daily.]

SJ: What do you want more people to know about BKK?

JB: We add new songs every Tuesday and post them on our facebook. We buy all the latest hits and create songs that you can't find anywhere

else in the world/solar system/galaxy/universe/etc. Every 6 months we retire the very top-sung songs at karaoke to allow space for these rare and unique songs to take the spotlight. We have retired the very top 300 or so. If you still want to sing "Don't Stop Believin'," "What's Up?," "Bohemian Rhapsody," etc. no worries, you still can in the privacy of our soon-to-be-available themed karaoke rooms. The weekends can get a little busy, but you get to sing in front of a lot of kettenz. If you want to sing more, try Sun-Thurs.

SJ: How do you select what songs to add?

JB: Our speshul sekret ketten algorythm.

SJ: What do you find fulfilling about karaoke?

JB: It's so open ended. You can go anywhere with your turn to sing: dance party, sadtimez, silliness, the world is your fancy karaoke oyster. I love that you don't have to be an amazing singer, just pick a song that you are excited about and perform the hell out of it. As a KJ I get a lot of joy out of making a song that one of my singers has always wanted their whole karaoke life a reality or seeing a new ketten'z face the first time they crack the book or hear themselves on our system. Warms my lil' ketten hart. •





How to Deal With the Crushing Weight of Familial Rejection Next Holiday Season

(And Look Great Doing It!)

'Tis the season to plan ahead

by Jordan Marzka

It's that time of year again. The days are growing shorter, the temperature is dropping, and the Supreme Court is set to decide if queer workers really deserve protection. The holiday season is finally over! With handfuls of family gatherings lurking in the recent past, one can't help but get excited for that warm and fuzzy feeling of not having to reunite with your kin for another year—unless of course the emotional burden of existing as a queer person has finally shattered your family's remarkably fragile sense of tolerance.

But don't worry! If you found yourself spending yet another Christmas latching onto the backs of friends lucky enough to have a family that doesn't cry at the sight of a drag queen, then this guide is for you! Whether this was your first year alone, or if you're practically the family outcast, here's how to make your next seasonal sorrows work. For you.

Harness the Power of Your Tears

Instead of fighting the tears, why not utilize them? Not only does crying act as an easy release for all those pent up feelings of rejection, but ten short minutes of crying can leave an afterglow effect for hours! Nothing tells your friends "I've got it under control!" like sneaking off to the bathroom every 3–5 hours and emerging with a face fit for the cover of GLAAD's magazine! (Just don't forget to bring along a bucket of warm Gatorade to rehydrate!) You'll leave everyone asking, "What is their secret?"

Practice Mass Accessorization

If you're longing to feel a deeper bond than friendship can offer you, it may be the ideal time to incorporate a new item into your wardrobe, or should I say, into everyone's wardrobe.

That's right! Gather up a group of friends and head to your nearest thrift store. Encourage them to find matching accessories, such as a group of silly hats or scarves. Bask in the validation that this brings you. Consider pitching funny, uniting nicknames to the group, such as "hat fan!" or "my literal parents in scarves!" Your friends will laugh and say it back. Congrats! They now have no idea that you're actually using your new wardrobe as a way to project your unsatisfied longings.

Join a Monastery

We all saw *Sister Act*; nuns are just big families dressed like pilgrims! So why not join in? There's multiple abbeys in the state of Oregon, each tucked away in little pockets of nature. So, while you're learning how to feel loved again, you can be surrounded by trees the size of your father's ego.

Concerned that a holy habit may not be the look for you? Don't worry! One is weird, two is

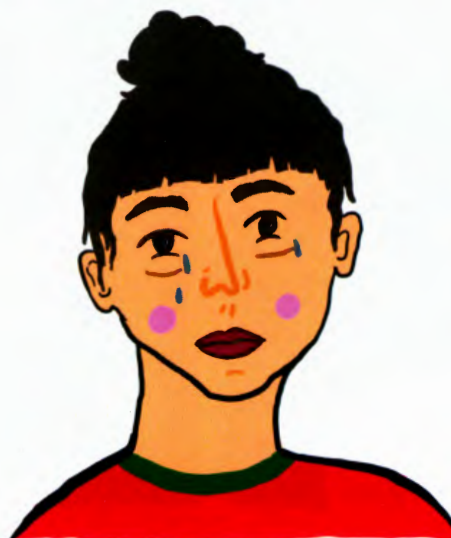
a trend, and more than a dozen is an intense social norm that your broken psyche has little chance of fighting.

Plus, once the nuns start their daily prayer, it'll be just like you're back at the dinner table with your family. Take that, nostalgia!

DIY it up

These solutions, while guaranteed to make you look incredible, aren't always the options that work for us. If all else fails, don't be afraid to take matters into your own hands—literally. Hand-knit a sweater that says what family means to you. It can be anything from: "I have one aunt who isn't actively ruining my life" or "My family consists of two friends, one dog, and way too many plants."

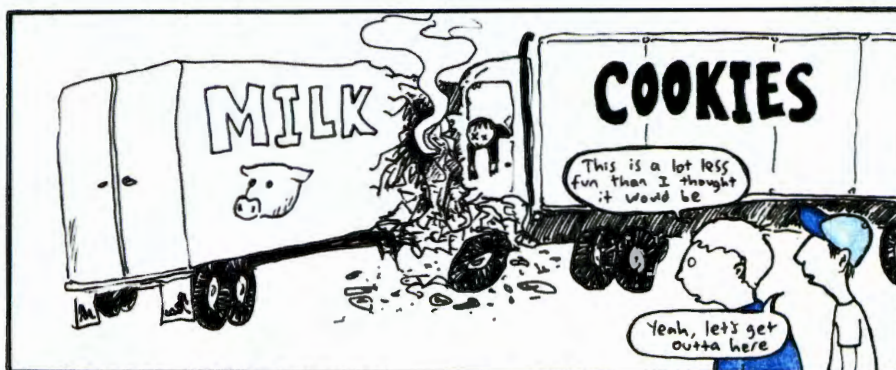
At the end of the day, the only thing that matters is that it comes from the heart. Because family—like fashion—is wholly unique and always changing. ●



Illustrations by Greer Siegel

FUNNY PAGE

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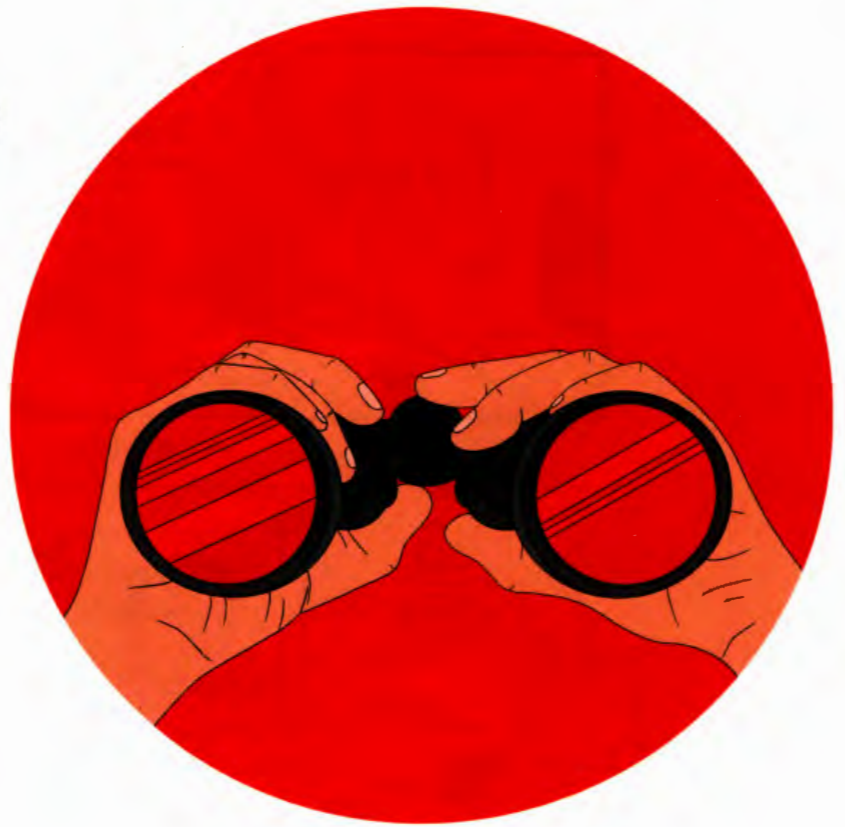
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The Pacific Sentinel is a monthly student-run magazine at PSU. We seek to uplift student voices and advocate on behalf of the marginalized. We analyze culture, politics, and daily life to continually take the dialogue further.

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